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To & from Americ
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S. G. Ziegler
1756 Radcliffe Road
Dayton, Ohio.

THE CONTINENTS

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AGGREY OF AFRICA

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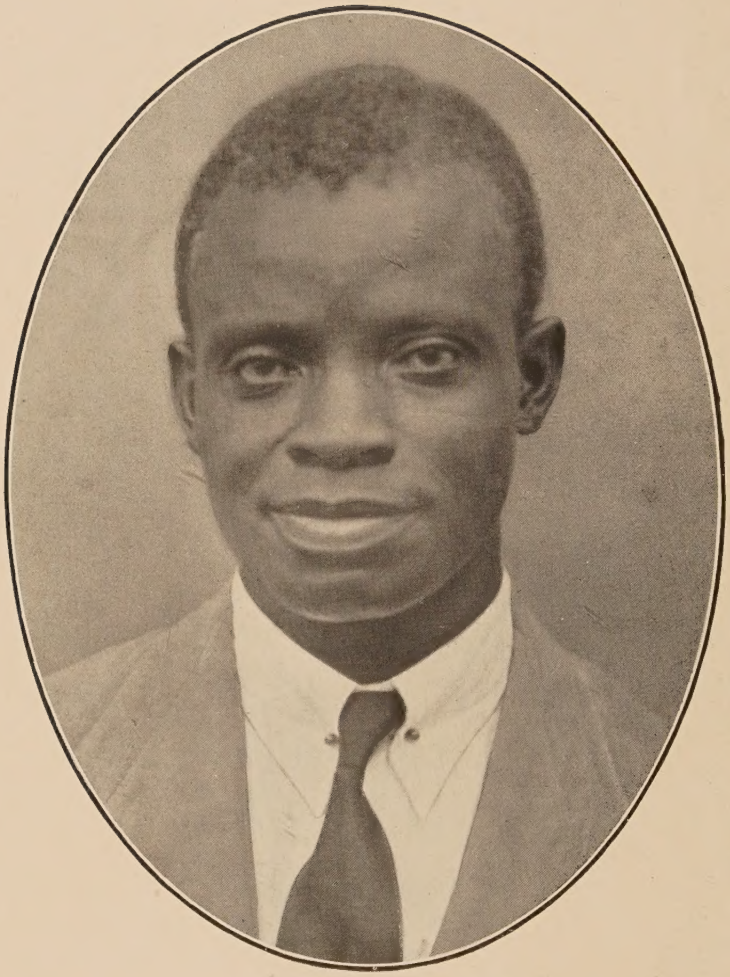

(Photo by Albert Dennis)

J. E. Kwegyir Aggrey

AGGREY OF AFRICA

A STUDY IN BLACK AND WHITE

BY

EDWIN W. SMITH

Author of "The Golden Stool," &c.

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PREFACE

THE initiative in preparing this biography was taken by the Phelps-Stokes Trustees who had drawn Aggrey into wider service by appointing him a member of the Education Commission to Africa. When they invited me to write it I responded with alacrity. I was convinced, as they were, that the remarkable story of my friend's life should be told to the world, chiefly because of what he was in himself and also because of the light it throws upon problems which vex our minds in these days.

I feared at first that the materials might prove insufficient, but the help of numerous coadjutors removed this apprehension by providing me with an almost embarrassing volume of letters and notes. I wish to record my thanks to all who have assisted me. Mr. Norman Young, one of the masters at the Prince of Wales' College, Achimota, kindly made investigations into Aggrey's early years and sent me extensive notes which I have embodied in chapters ii, iii and iv. Principal Fraser allowed me access to his circular letters written from Achimota, answered many inquiries and read the typescript of Part IV. Sir Gordon Guggisberg permitted me to interview him and also read through Part IV. The Rev. Dennis Kemp wrote me an account of Aggrey's early life on the Gold Coast, lent me letters and read through Part I. Among other correspondents in Africa I must thank particularly the Revs. H. M. Grace and E. S. Daniell of Uganda; Mr. Dougal, Principal of the Kabete College in Kenya; Canon Spanton, late of Zanzibar; Dr. Hetherwick, late of Nyasaland; the Rev. L. P. Hardaker, of Southern Rhodesia; Dr. and Mrs. Wilkie, of the Gold Coast; Dr. C. T. Loram and Principal Henderson, of South Africa. All these have given me much

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information, and Dr. Loram read through chapter xi. African gentlemen have also helped me; I may name Mr. K. L. B. Kisosankole, of Uganda, and Mr. de Graft Johnson, of the Gold Coast.

During a tour which the Phelps-Stokes Trustees enabled me to make in the United States, I gathered much material from Aggrey's friends, both white and coloured. I am especially grateful to Dr. Anson Phelps Stokes, Professor Giddings, Mr. L. Roy, Dr. W. J. Trent, and Mr. T. B. Patterson. Mrs. Aggrey entertained me in her home, endured in the kindest way my prolonged questioning, and allowed me to read a great number of her husband's letters. She has also read through the entire manuscript. I have abundant reason for being grateful to my friend Dr. Jesse Jones for all the interest he has taken in the book; he organised the collection of material, supplied many documents, answered my questions, and read through all the chapters. At every stage of the work I have enjoyed the expert assistance of my friend Miss Gollock.

I ought to add that none of my correspondents is responsible for statements which I make, for opinions which I express.

It has been my endeavour to set Aggrey's life against its African and American background. Many historical and other references which might seem out of place in some biographies are here necessary if Aggrey is to be understood. I have had no desire to paint an idealised picture, but have striven rather to portray Aggrey as he was—a very human being. I leave it to readers to draw the moral of his life. I would here only point out that this story must give pause to such writers as Dr. McDougall, who declares that the African race "has never produced any individuals of really high mental and moral endowments, even when brought under foreign influences," and adds: "it would seem that it is incapable of producing such individuals."*

* *The Group Mind*, p. 136.

Arrangements have been made by the Phelps-Stokes Fund by which the royalties on this book will be paid to the widow of Dr. Aggrey for such use as may seem to her advisable in connection with the education of her children and the advancement of the cause which Dr. Aggrey had so much at heart.

EDWIN W. SMITH.

Walton-on-Thames,
April 5th, 1929.

TO
THE
AGGREYS
THAT
SHALL
BE

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BIOGRAPHICAL TABLE

1875	October 18	.. Born at Anamabu, Gold Coast.
1883	June 24	.. Baptised. Entered Methodist school, Cape Coast.
1888		Entered Dennis Kemp's House.
1891		Assistant teacher, Cape Coast.
1896		His father's death.
	December	.. Interpreter, Ashanti expedition.
1898		Headmaster, Cape Coast.
	July 10	.. Departs to America.
	October	.. Entered Livingstone College, Salisbury.
1902		Graduated B.A., Livingstone College Registrar and Professor.
1903	November 30	.. Ordained Elder, Zion Methodist Church.
1904	July ..	.. First classes, Columbia University.
1905	November 8	.. Married Miss Rose Douglas.
1912		A.M., Livingstone College. D.D., Hood Theological Seminary.
1914	November	.. Became Pastor, Miller's Chapel and Sandy Ridge.
	July ..	.. Recommenced studies at Columbia.
1918	July ..	.. Entered Columbia University as matriculated student.
1920	July 3 ..	.. Sailed from U.S.A. on first Phelps-Stokes Commission.
	September	.. In Sierra Leone and Liberia.
	Oct. 4–Nov. 4	.. In Gold Coast.
	Nov. 4–Dec. 6	In Nigeria.
	December 16–25	In Cameroon.
1921	January 1–25	.. In Belgian Congo.
	Jan. 27–Mar. 10	In Angola.
	Mar. 19–June 16	In South Africa.
	July 22	.. Students' Conference, Swanwick.
	October	.. International Missionary Council, Mohonk.

1921		Re-entered at Columbia University.
1922	June ..	.. First tour in Canada.
	October	.. Teachers' diploma and M.A., Columbia.
1923	December	.. Third tour in Canada. Passed examinations for Ph.D., Columbia.
	December 31	.. Student Volunteer Movement Convention, Indianapolis.
1924	January 5	.. Sailed from U.S.A. on second Phelps-Stokes Commission.
	Jan. 29–Feb. 6	.. In Abyssinia.
	Feb. 18–Mar. 9	.. In Kenya.
	March 10–23	.. In Uganda.
	[April 5	.. Foundation stone laid of Achimota.]
	Mar. 30–Apr. 15	In Tanganyika Territory and Zanzibar.
	Apr. 22–June 13	In Nyasaland and Rhodesia.
	June 16–20	.. In South Africa.
	July ..	.. Appointed on the staff of Achimota.
	October 15	.. Arrived on the Gold Coast.
1925	April ..	.. The Prince of Wales at Achimota.
	July ..	.. Sailed for America on leave.
	November	.. Returned to Gold Coast with Mrs. Aggrey.
1926	February	.. Kindergarten opened at Achimota.
1927	January 28	.. Formal opening of Achimota.
	May ..	.. Sailed for England and America.
	July 30	.. Died at New York.

Part I

THE AFRICAN

"Africa—my Africa."

"I am proud of my colour; whoever is not proud of his colour is not fit to live."

"I have no time for revenge—that's not African."

"I am a debtor to all men, to all civilisations, to world-Christianity, and to all kinds of educational programmes."

"I am a brand plucked from fire. I am a humble product of the self-sacrifice of those who came out to the White Man's Grave."

"We often sing Heber's lines:

The heathen in his blindness
Bows down to wood and stone.

In his blindness? No—in his hunger."

"With my people, it is not so much *what* you say as *how* you say it, and *who* does the saying."

"To my people one 'let *us* do' is worth more than a thousand 'you must do's.' Africa is a child, but our paternalists fail to observe that this child is growing. They also forget that in many instances it is more important to work *with* than to work *for*."

J. E. K. Aggrey.

AGGREY OF AFRICA

CHAPTER I

THE MAN

"THE man's a saint; damn his colour!"

A group of settlers in East Africa were desirous of seeing and hearing this visitor of whom everybody was talking. They saw before them a slim, black African who talked good sense in English which was as clear and idiomatic as their own. His ready wit, his sunny smile, his intense earnestness and manifest sincerity, his frank and manly demeanour, attracted and rather fascinated them. These settlers were not wont to sentimentalise about Africans in general. As a matter of fact they were critical. But they recognised a man when they saw him. They discussed him among themselves, inquired as to his history, canvassed his opinions, went again and again to hear him, asked him questions to test his knowledge and attitudes, and finally one of them summed up the judgment of the group. "The man's a saint," he said, "damn his colour!" He meant, of course, that the tint of a man's skin is not the most significant thing about him. Beneath external and patent dissimilarities which separated this Negro from themselves, these Europeans perceived fundamental resemblances; they even detected elements that made him in some respects their superior. In view of these things, the blackness of his skin was an irrelevance.

AGGREY was an African of the Africans. He never apologised for his colour. He was proud of it. "If I went to heaven," he was wont to affirm, "and God said, 'Aggrey, I am going to send you back, would you like to go as a white man?' I should reply, 'No, send me back as a black man, yes, completely black.' And if God should ask, 'Why?' I would reply, 'Because I have a work to do as a black man that no white man can do. Please send me back as black as you can make me.'"

Born in Africa, educated largely in America, there were areas in both countries where he was exposed to insult because he was a member of a race that has a black skin and woolly hair. Between him, a cultured gentleman, and the most vicious and ignorant European, many people drew a line, definite and impassable. They refused to accord to him the slightest recognition of social equality; they would not even address him as "*Mister* Aggrey." On a crowded British ship, sailing between America and England, he was given a cabin to himself and a table to himself, because some of the passengers thought it intolerable to associate with a black man. An acquaintance asked him what he thought about it. "Well," said he, "the joke is on my side. You are packed like sardines in a tin; I have a cabin to myself, a table to myself, a whole steward to myself!" He always made a jest of such experiences—and they were numerous. But it was not natural for him to take slights and insults good humouredly. People fancied his skin was tough as it was black. On the contrary he was intensely proud, and exceedingly sensitive—as sensitive as the tropical plant that curls up its leaves at the slightest touch. Every insult cut him to the quick; but he attained such self-mastery that he could smile when other men would curse. Whenever he was about to undertake a journey on which he would be subject to slights and

sneers, he retired into solitude to prepare his spirit to meet them. "Keep your temper and smile," he would say, "that's what Jesus meant when he told men to turn the other cheek."

Aggrey's gaiety was genuine and infectious. He rediscovered the ancient Christian virtue of hilarity. Salvation has begun when you can laugh, and laugh, and laugh, as he laughed. There is an untranslatable African proverb to the effect that a man may smile when his teeth are cold and dry. Aggrey's smile was not upon his lips; his laughter bubbled up from a blithesome heart; his soul was a smile. This was so characteristic of the man that the solemnity of the funeral service seemed incongruous to at least one of his friends: he wanted to get up and tell some of Aggrey's inimitable jokes. After his death a lady stopped suddenly in a London street and said to her companion: "I love to think he is making them merry in heaven."

Men who lived with Aggrey and travelled with him in later years, under conditions that test the manhood, wondered at his invariable cheerfulness and complete equanimity. "For some months I shared a house with him," says one of his colleagues at the Prince of Wales College on the Gold Coast, "and I never knew him to be other than cheerful and courteous, unselfish and generous, always ready to see the best in everyone, always understanding, always forgiving." He had good reason, sometimes, to be otherwise—to be sad and bitter. For three months Dr. A. W. Wilkie travelled with him in West Africa, and was often, he confesses, irritated through weariness and discomfort and delays; but he never saw Aggrey in a temper, never heard him say a nasty word about anyone. Yet there was a time when Aggrey's gusts of anger were violent. Men who were his pupils in early days speak of his swift wrath venting itself in sharp words and blows. He grew in grace—in self-control.

As an orator Aggrey was superb. None who heard him address a great assembly, when he was at his best, will ever forget the experience. In his time he faced a

great variety of audiences, and some reacted more readily than others to the stimulus of his eloquence; but in greater or less degree they all responded. He succeeded least with stodgy, severe religious folk to whom all display of emotion was suspect. Students of all colours took him to their hearts. Perhaps the element of surprise entered largely into their appreciation. Opinions as to his personal appearance varied curiously. Some found him graceful, handsome; upon others he left a first impression of ungainliness, of gawkiness. The contrast between Aggrey silent and Aggrey eloquent startled people. He talked fluently, graphically, wittily, and every muscle participated in his talk. He was the despair of reporters—"How can you report a man's hands?" said one of them. He always appealed to the best in men and women. There was no laboriousness in preparation. In the days of his pastorate, and later, he often caused his wife distress by an apparent insouciance in regard to his sermons. He would be busy about many things until the moment of departure and if she reminded him would touch his forehead and reply with a smile: "Don't worry, dear, it is all here." Then in the car he would sit silent for a time, and perhaps scribble a few lines on an envelope. I found some of these hasty, almost illegible, outlines among his papers. Occasionally he wrote an essay to be read before some society, but writing (except letter-writing) was irksome to him; I doubt whether he ever indited beforehand a speech or sermon. His greatest speeches, lasting perhaps two hours, were extemporaneous. Behind his overflowing oratory lay a solid store of knowledge. He had all the African's extraordinary memory for words. At slight provocation, or at none, he would quote long passages from Latin and Greek authors. He dearly loved the roll of long, sonorous words—often used them deliberately to impress people. Phrases like "elimination by substitution" were his delight: "I wish all missionaries would learn algebra, for then they would know how to eliminate by substitution," was one of his favourite sayings.

Aggrey was usually discursive and often florid in style. There was an inconsequence in his speech that tended at times to irritate his friends. This was a characteristic African trait. We endeavour to frame a discourse in logical order ; the African sees a series of moving pictures in his mind and he puts them into words as they occur. That is how Aggrey talked, wittily, vividly, but often, as it seemed to Europeans, interminably and at random. He would spin out an illustration until he seemed to be absorbed in the story and to have forgotten his theme. Inconsequential as he might be, he had wonderful power over both white and black audiences ; and he never failed to drive his points home.

One element in his power was his very remarkable insight. He had intuitions to which most men, and many women, are strangers ; though it should be said that what appeared to be intuition was often the result of rapid and accurate observation. When travelling as a lad with his missionary, the Rev. Dennis Kemp, he noticed an unclothed woman on the path ahead of them. When she turned off into the forest Aggrey said, " She is sick in her mind." " How do you know ? " asked Mr. Kemp. "As she walk," was the boy's laconic reply. In later years a woman visited him and talked about her husband, who was very ill. Aggrey looked straight into her eyes and said sternly, " You want him to die." She protested, but Aggrey held her to it and at last she confessed that he was right. He was asked how he knew. " Because," he said, " while she was talking she played with her wedding ring and nearly got it off." When the members of the Education Commission addressed a meeting in Africa they always put Aggrey last on the programme, because he would be sure to sense any misunderstanding created by previous speakers and would tactfully repair any blunders. Always observant, he studied men's faces and very quickly read their character. Men and women who, when first meeting him, recoiled with distaste, and afterwards became his intimate friends, confess that they feel discomfort when they reflect how quickly Aggrey must have sensed their feeling.

His gift of seeing rapidly to the core of a matter was perceptible to men who worked with him on committee. He did not thrust himself forward, but would sit silent, his dark glances flitting from speaker to speaker, his face reflecting each change of thought. Then someone would refer to him and in a moment there was a flash of wit, an incisive phrase or two, a sudden clearing of issues, and the committee were at the heart of things. It was interesting to see how those who knew him always leaned forward alertly when he arose to speak: the flash and thrust were so delicious and so unfailingly sure.

For many years Aggrey lived in an atmosphere of conflict. His temperament, deeply affected by his genuine Christianity, by his studies and his intimate knowledge of affairs gained by extensive travel, forbade his becoming a violent partisan. He knew the African from the inside; in spite of his long sojourn in America, and his acquisition of western habits, he remained thoroughly African. It would be easy to lay more emphasis than he did upon those painful incidents which revealed the deep-seated prejudices against men of his race: to him they were incidents, and no more, to be expected and endured in a Christian spirit. Few Negroes, if any, have had more white friends. He owed much to them. He admired the good qualities shown by Europeans and Americans. He studied the point of view of those who were inimical to his people, and made every allowance for circumstances. Linked as he was to both parties, it was always his passionate desire to see them comprehend each other and to co-operate in service for the good of their common humanity. We shall have much to say about his position as Interpreter of one race to the other and as Apostle of Co-operation. Here lies the real significance of his career.

Few men have merited more fully the blessing promised to peacemakers. As a Negro said to me, "Aggrey just hated *fusses*"—by which he meant quarrels. He spent a large part of his time in composing differences. His good sense, his tact, his appreciation of different points of view, his unwearied patience, his deep sense of

brotherhood, made him an ideal mediator. The harmony which he often succeeded in producing between individuals and between lesser groups, he laboured strenuously to bring about between the two races. He had great faith in men, in their willingness to come together if their prejudices could be removed. " He believed in everybody," says one of his friends, " and it seemed to me that everybody believed in him. They just could not help doing so."

His vitality was intense. He seemed to be charged with a consuming fire. Beside him most men appeared, and many men felt, thin and ghostly and only half alive. He was always restless. " Sit down, Aggrey," his beloved friend and chief, Dr. Jesse Jones, would say, hundreds of times on their travels together. It was difficult to pin him down to a piece of work that demanded sustained unremitting concentration. He loved to run about the country addressing assemblies, great and small. In this respect he displayed amazing energy. In the short period between the two Education Commissions, and while studying for his degree at Columbia University, he delivered 500 speeches. Volatile as was his temperament, he showed an admirable tenacity of purpose in some directions. His pursuit of learning, from first to last, was astonishing in its intensity. His thirst for knowledge was insatiable. In the last few weeks of his life he was planning to study for a time in Germany. A glance around his study or into the catalogue of his library was sufficient to show the variety of his interests; he was interested in everything. He sipped incessantly, and if he did not drink deeply at every spring he accumulated a mass of information. His memory was such that what he had read was at instant command. Wide knowledge of itself does not make an educated man. Aggrey was educated in the best sense; he had the true spirit of humanism in

him: he had attained a view of the whole, a *Weltanschauung*, which renders possible the interpretation of varying experiences.

While it was not difficult to detect in him certain uncouthnesses, Aggrey was an African in his innate courtesy. He never consciously did a discourteous thing. With all his pride there went a lowliness of mind. When he occupied a high position on the staff of Achimota College he received a visit from the Rev. J. B. Anaman, his old Fanti pastor and friend. When Mr. Anaman rose in the morning he found, to his vexation, that Aggrey had been up before him and had cleaned his boots. "I used to clean them when a boy, and I am still your boy," said Aggrey in reply to Mr. Anaman's remonstrances.

Men said that he was vain. He was not modest, it is true, if modesty means a disregard of one's own worth and attainments. He delighted in collecting newspaper cuttings about himself. If a journal contained an article relating to him he would frequently purchase a dozen or more copies and send them to his friends. In his letters he narrated his oratorical exploits and the eulogies he received, all with keen gusto. If readers of this biography were to deem him vainglorious, they would err. The letters we have quoted were, it should be noted, intended for the eyes of his intimates; I have heard others complain of his reticence in regard to himself. If he was an egotist it was with the egotism of a child who delights in telling mother what the teacher says about him, of the praises bestowed, of the prizes gained, knowing full well that mother will share in his happiness. Aggrey loved to have friends rejoice with him when he rejoiced. And one phrase occurs more frequently than any other in these descriptions of his triumphs: "This makes me feel humble. Pray for me." Adulation was showered copiously upon him; but it did not turn his head.

A great simplicity marked his manner of life. In some respects he was austere, almost ascetic. He was always indifferent to the pleasures of the table. He ate enough to live—hardly so much. While he and his wife were

studying in New York he would frequently return to their rooms toward eleven o'clock at night and ask mildly for dinner, not having eaten perhaps since morning. As one of his Negro friends told me, " he did whatever he had to do and then thought about food." He never smoked tobacco, never tasted stimulants, not even tea or coffee. He drank nothing but water, milk and cocoa. " I'm much too young " was his favourite way of declining tea. He was always careful of his dress and aimed at having the best quality. If at Achimota he earned the name " Dr. Khaki " and became notorious for his soft collars, this was his way of protesting against the sartorial extravagances of his young fellow-countrymen. He was fastidious—some said, fussy and overconscious —as to personal cleanliness. He never allowed anything to come between him and the morning tub. This was all part of his deliberate purpose to keep his body under that his spirit might soar. He knew where lay the weakness which he shared with other members of his race, and he fought against it by self-discipline. Purity was a passion with him. It was probably for this reason that he always disliked anything red in colour.

Intensely affectionate in disposition, Aggrey showed himself at his very best in his relations with friends and members of his family. " If ever he exaggerated," says one of his colleagues, " it was in extolling the virtues of his friends." He was a most voluminous letter-writer— ten or twelve quarto sheets being a not unusual allowance. In the hundreds of letters which I have read for the purpose of this biography there is not a line that he might be ashamed to see in print. In his comments on men and affairs there is an entire absence of cynicism and bitterness. Even when he writes about opponents it is without harshness. He possessed in a rare degree the grace of appreciation : he delighted in giving people credit for what they had done, in reminding his friends what they were to him, and had done for him. He never forgot the slightest kindness shown to him. If at times his friends thought his praise to be over-stated, well, they felt im-

pelled to be more what Aggrey thought them to be. His letters to his children are charming in their playfulness, noble in their counsels. His prolonged absences from home were a sore trial to his fatherly heart. "My daughter," he wrote in one letter, "this world contains many valuable things. But to some of us who have seen much of the chances and changes therein there is nothing more priceless than a letter from home, from a loved one, from your own devoted child or wife. Money cannot of itself secure such a thing. It comes a boon from the skies and we thank God for it."

In conversing with men and women, white and black, who knew him more intimately than I did, I made it a rule to say at one point: "Now tell me Aggrey's failings." It was interesting to watch their reaction to that prompting. Almost invariably they sat silent for a moment, as if racking their brains, and then faltered, "Well, we do not know." One could only say that Aggrey seemed unable to be brutally straight in rebuke when rebuke was called for. Yet she admitted readily that in talking with Europeans and Africans alike he was honest with them as to their faults. There was in him no sycophancy. He made many a man, and many a company, smart under his condemnations. Yet he expressed them so kindly and so skilfully that he rarely caused resentment. It was a rebuke that healed. Others spoke of his irritating unpunctuality, his remissness in failing to keep appointments, but conceded at once that it was often because he subordinated what he regarded as less to greater interests. "He was truthful, but he was not veracious," said one who knew him well. I suppose he meant that Aggrey did not always perceive things in their naked outlines but coloured by his imagination. This no doubt was an African characteristic. It should be added that he often saw deeper into the heart of things than other men. That he had his faults and limitations is true enough, for he was human, very human. But many who knew and loved him would echo what a venerable Negro elder of one of his village churches said to me:

" The good Book says there is no man perfect, no, not one, but I reckon Professor Aggrey came as near perfection as any man that ever lived."

There was a strong strain of mysticism in Aggrey's constitution. He had an eye for beauty, a soul sensitive to the ineffable mystery of things. A colleague at Achimota treasures this above all recollections of him. One day he observed Aggrey crouching in the middle of a flower bed at the entrance to his house. Alone he sat there on his heels gazing deep into a canna as if he would wrest from it the secret of its beauty. There, his colleague thought rightly, he revealed the last depths of his soul. Looking wonderingly, reverently, into the heart of a flower—that is the real Aggrey.

His inherited temperament was rich. He owed more than he could tell to his friends, white and black, who loved him—to the teachers who took pains with him. But the chief influence in Aggrey's life was his religion. It was in the nature of things that being an African he should be religious, for the Africans are among the most spiritually sensitive of all peoples. Born in a home traditionally pagan, he surrendered his young heart to Christ in early years and followed Him unfalteringly, if imperfectly, and it would seem without a doubt. When American fellow-students said that they could not understand a man remaining a Christian who had studied biology and psychology, he would reply, " I am a Christian not blindly, but have a reason for the faith that is in me." He was a Doctor of Divinity, he studied theology in a famous school, but there is astonishingly little of dogmatic theology in his letters and speeches, and as little in the few sermons that are reported. He was no denominationalist ; he never ceased to deplore the sectarianism which brings confusion and perplexity to his fellow-Africans ; he was wont to draw a strong contrast between Christianity and what he named " Churchianity." He accepted the profound simplicities of the Gospel, and tried to translate them into the terms of everyday life. For his favourite sermons he drew texts from the Old

Testament ; but it was the New Testament he taught and endeavoured to live. He was, they say, reticent, as men of deep convictions often are reticent, about what was most precious to him in the realities of religion. But no man could know Aggrey without realising that a sense of God's presence pervaded his every thought and action. He lived in communion with the unseen : prayer was a very real and vital thing to him. What greater tribute can a wife pay her husband than is expressed in Mrs. Aggrey's words : " He lifted me nearer to God " ?

It was not as a constructive thinker that his work was done, but as an artist and a prophet. The value of his message to the world lay in his firm grasp of principles and in the passionate sincerity with which he expounded and enforced them. To all the biggest questions in politics, in education, in life in all its length and breadth, he had a clear and unswerving answer. It was emphatically a Christian answer. The work he did was to enunciate it and to drive it into the minds of men with all the force of his personality. He himself was an answer to many of the questions that vex mankind.

He expressed his life's purpose in a letter to one of his nephews :

" *To those who have fire I give more fire and to those who have might I want to give a might mightier than man's. I want to sing a song of hope to the despairing ; to breathe the breath of love that will chase away all hating. I believe, my devoted nephew, that right will ultimately conquer wrong, virtue conquer vice, harmony take the place of discords.*"

Such was the man of whose tale of years these pages tell.

CHAPTER II

ANTECEDENTS AND BIRTH

JAMES EMMAN KWEGYIR AGGREY was born on Monday, October 18th, 1875, at Anamabu in the Gold Coast Colony, West Africa.

The date is significant. Aggrey was the child of a Revolution—for such we must name the vast process of change that transformed much of Africa during his lifetime. The fermentation induced by modern western civilisation began in earnest at about the date of his birth.

A glance at the earlier history of his native land will assist readers to understand the story we are to tell.

After the Moors had been driven from the western portion of the Iberian Peninsula, the Portuguese aspired to win for Christendom—and for Portugal—some of the African lands that had not yet fallen under the dominion of the Infidel. Early in the fifteenth century intrepid mariners began to push their way southwards along the African coast. These voyages yielded unexpected profits. Coffers were replenished with the gold of Guinea. The fields of Portugal, lying waste since the Moorish wars, were cultivated by slaves ravished from African homes. In 1471 the caravels anchored off a shore where the natives washed the sands for gold—we still name it the Gold Coast. Here in 1482, with stones brought prepared for the purpose, an altar and a fort * were erected: symbols of forces which thenceforth were to be active in transforming the continent. The original religious and political aims of the voyages had by this time, however, retreated into the background; gold and slaves were now

* Saõ Jorge da Mina, the modern Elmina.

the primary objects. At a later period gold to the value of three million sterling was annually shipped from Elmina alone; the whole coast has yielded upwards of seven hundred millions, besides some hundreds of thousands of slaves.

Other nations cast avaricious glances upon this lucrative traffic; but until the Reformation released them from allegiance to the Pope, who had granted Africa to Portugal, they could not intervene. In 1551 a British seaman carried off 150 pounds of gold from under the eyes of the Portuguese. Then came the Dutch, and later the Danes and Swedes. As the years passed the shore was strung with European forts, whose guns protected the merchants and whose walls confined the cargoes of slaves until these could be embarked.

The abolition of the slave trade at the beginning of the nineteenth century very considerably diminished the interest of Europe in western Africa. Nine-tenths of the traffic had been in human chattels and when these were no longer exportable, the region lost its chief value. None of the Powers which retained their forts on the Gold Coast cherished then any intention of extending its dominion. Portugal had disappeared from the scene long before this, and now other nations withdrew, leaving only the British and the Dutch. On more than one occasion the British were on the point of retiring. Their officials had no authority, and for long claimed none, beyond the forts. In 1844 some of the tribes acknowledged by treaty the jurisdiction of Queen Victoria in purely criminal matters and declared human sacrifices to be contrary to law. But no territorial rights were conferred, nor were they sought. Great Britain was content to exercise a vague protectorate, the chief value of which to the people was that it restrained the bellicose Ashantis of the north from making themselves masters of the whole country. Beyond the founding of a school at Cape Coast in 1815, the British authorities did nothing directly for the education of the tribesmen within range of their guns.

It was during this period that the missionary societies began their beneficent work on the Gold Coast: the Basel Mission in 1828, the Wesleyan Methodists in 1834, and the Bremen Mission in 1847.*

Then a new era set in. The prodigious increase in the population of Europe led to an ever-growing demand for raw materials and new markets. The eyes of the civilised world turned towards the Dark Continent, still very largely, except for the coastline, an unknown land. There followed the feverish scramble which has brought almost the entire continent under the sway of Europe. The Gold Coast naturally fell to Britain, whose interests were paramount since, in 1872, she had acquired the Dutch forts. A year before Aggrey's birth—following Sir Garnet Wolseley's successful campaign against the Ashantis—the British began to exercise more control over the tribes and the Gold Coast was (with Lagos) made into a "Colony." By the time our story opens the whole of the seaboard, stretching 360 miles from Newtown on the west to Denu on the east, acknowledged the suzerainty of Britain. The tribes of the interior were never conquered, nor were their lands ever ceded. Like the coastal tribes, they came voluntarily under British protection, the Chiefs with their Councils retaining their right to levy revenues and to administer the ancient customary laws. In 1901 an Order in Council declared the annexation of all parts of the Gold Coast hitherto not included within the dominion of the King of Britain. At the same time Ashanti was annexed by right of conquest and extensive tracts of country, known as the Northern Territories, were declared to be under the King's protection. The Gold Coast Colony and its two dependencies are about as large as the British Isles and are inhabited by approximately 2,500,000 Africans and 2,000 Europeans.

* The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel had supported a clergyman at Cape Coast Castle as early as 1751, but he remained only five years. The S.P.G. resumed its work in 1904. The Roman Catholic Mission dates from 1879.

Vast changes have come over this rich and fertile land since the infant Aggrey saw the light in 1875. It has settled into security and peace after devastating inter-tribal wars which lasted over a century. Four years after Aggrey's birth an African brought in a cocoa pod, and some time later the Governor, Sir W. B. Griffith, imported and planted other pods. Since then a great industry has grown up until the Gold Coast is now the premier cocoa-producer of the world. Industry and commerce have so increased that this is proclaimed the richest Colony in Africa. Railways and roads penetrate in many directions. The Government has taken its trusteeship seriously, all its activities being directed to the promotion of the welfare and progress of the people. Native institutions, to which the tribesmen are deeply attached, have been maintained as far as possible in their integrity, or adapted to the new conditions. The people's rights in their soil have been respected. Civilisation has made rapid strides. Large numbers of the Africans are Christians. Education has been fostered. Aggrey lived to be assistant vice-principal of a College erected by Government at a cost of over £600,000.

The Gold Coast is divided into sixty-one small independent Native States, each under its paramount chief and all owning allegiance to the British Crown. There are several distinct tribes, the largest and most important being the Fanti, to which Aggrey belonged. Fantis and Ashantis derive from a common stock, their language and social institutions being practically identical. According to tradition these Akan peoples, as they are collectively named, formed part of the Negro kingdom of Ghana, whose metropolis was situated in the neighbourhood of Timbuktu on the Niger. After enduring for a thousand years up to A.D. 1400, the kingdom fell into decay conse-

quent upon the Muhammadan invasions of the Sudan, and various tribes hived off. The Akan people went south In the seventeenth century the Ashantis, under their great leader, Osei Tutu, founded Kumasi. Prior to this date the Fantis had pushed on towards the coast, where they drove out or absorbed the tribes which they found in possession. Their principal centre at first was Mankessim, some twenty-four miles north-east of Cape Coast, but they were vigorous colonisers and soon spread over a wide stretch of country. They split up into many small communities. When the Portuguese first arrived the Fantis were dressed in the skins of wild animals and were armed with spears and shields, bows and arrows. Dowered with high intelligence and considerable artistic gifts, they made rapid progress in civilisation. Perhaps no people in West Africa have shown a greater readiness to absorb western culture. At the same time they have developed a strong national consciousness. But for their lack of cohesion they might have formed a great and powerful nation. Their best characteristics shine out in the subject of this biography, who was a Fanti of the Fantis.

Aggrey had a proper pride in his race and lineage. When a journalist wrote of him that he came of a semi-royal line, Aggrey penned a confidential letter in 1925 to protest. " No real Aggrey comes from a *semi*-royal line," he said. " The Aggreys as early as 1076 and before gave their name to the Carthagenian, sometimes called Phœnician, beads now worth their weight twice in gold. My father is a direct descendant of that line, hence he can speak for several paramount kings and his speech binds them. No paramount chief's line on the Gold Coast is higher than mine, and *very* few [are as high] as mine." A few weeks before his death Aggrey wrote to the same correspondent: " My father was related to kings of lineages with traditions that go back to the battle or siege of Ghineah in the eleventh century."*

* I have been unable to discover any confirmation of these statements—particularly in regard to the Aggrey beads.

While he was proud of such traditions, Aggrey said: "I don't parade my blood. . . . Don't write about my origin. Only few know this of me. . . . I never care about it. I am an African." In the natural course of things he was eligible for election to several Stools on his mother's side, and more than once was asked to accept one; but said he, "I prefer the Stool, the Golden Stool, of education." He believed that he could better serve his people as a teacher.

It is worth while, perhaps, in passing, to say that Aggrey was not related to the kings of Cape Coast who bore a name similar to, or identical with, his own. Some of them figure rather conspicuously in the history of the country.

The Cape Coast Aggreys are descended from the Effutu people who were in possession of the district when the Fantis descended from the north; whereas the Aggreys of Anamabu pride themselves upon being pure Fanti.

Aggrey's father, Kodwo Kwegyir, a very interesting personality, was born about 1816 at Anamabu. The town, lying thirteen miles from Cape Coast, is famous in Gold Coast history. Here in 1753 the English built a fort, described as "the most compact, the most regularly built" on the coast. Thirty pieces of heavy cannon were mounted on the walls. For a long time it shared with Cormantine (three miles away) the honour, or the disgrace, of being the greatest slave-market in the country. It was not uncommon, says Henry Meredith, who wrote in 1812, to see from twenty to thirty sail of shippings of different nations, trading there together. The town was the largest and most populous on the coast. It was attacked and captured in June, 1806, by the Ashantis in the course of one of their wars against the Fantis. Upwards of two-thirds of the inhabitants, calculated to

number at least fifteen thousand, perished. The invaders blockaded the fort, but were persuaded to retire. If Anamabu recovered from this blow, it was not for long, nor perhaps entirely. The trade diminished in later years and the large residences once occupied by prosperous African merchants fell into ruins. In 1898 it contained no more than two thousand souls.

Kodwo Kwegyir was employed as a Gold Taker by one of the African merchants, the Hon. George Blankson, a member of the Governor's Council and a somewhat prominent man in his day, having been employed by the Governor in negotiations with the Ashantis, first in 1853 and then in 1865. At that time the only two forms of currency in use were gold dust and a small amount of English and American coinage. William Bosman, the Dutchman who wrote a vivid description of life on the Gold Coast at the beginning of the eighteenth century, said that the Negroes were very subtle Artists in the sophisticating of Gold. "They can so neatly falsifie and counterfeit the Gold Dust and the Mountain Gold that several inexperienced Traders are frequently cheated and by bought Experience are taught how to know Gold."* No doubt the passage of a century did not lessen their artfulness. Hence the necessity of an expert Gold Taker to weigh the gold dust taken in exchange for merchandise and to detect any inferior quality in it. It was also his business to induce customers to pay in gold rather than in coin, for the gold could be sent to England and sold at a handsome profit. A satisfactory Gold Taker was awarded a commission on the amount of gold dust amassed, but while the office was a responsible and respectable one, a man rarely became wealthy by it. Kodwo Kwegyir was not one of the few.

In 1873, after their failure to defeat the Ashanti invaders, the Chiefs accused George Blankson of treachery, alleging that he had supplied gunpowder to the enemy. Mr. Blankson vehemently denied the charge. Partly per-

* William Bosman, *A New and Accurate Description of the Coast of Guinea* (English tr. 1705), p. 82.

haps because of this cloud which gathered round him, and because of the depression of trade that followed the Ashanti War of 1873-4, his firm became bankrupt. Kodwo Kwegyir then found it necessary to move to Cape Coast, where he entered the service of one of the wealthiest of the African traders, Merchant Sarbah. He grew no richer in pocket, but gained the respect of his employer. Mr. Sarbah's son, J. M. Sarbah, the first native of the Gold Coast to be called to the English Bar and the author of two notable books, *Fanti Customary Laws* and *The Fanti National Constitution*, became in after years greatly attached to our Aggrey.

In the Gold Coast a man's political responsibilities and power are often out of proportion to his wealth and social position. Kodwo Kwegyir, the humble Gold Taker, was perhaps the most influential elder in the Council of Amonu IV, the Paramount Chief of Anamabu. He inherited from a long line of ancestors the office of Omankyiame and by virtue of this position, and the ability with which he performed his duties, he was a person of considerable importance in his little world. After his removal to Cape Coast he frequently visited Anamabu to fulfil the obligations of his office.

The word Kyiame is commonly translated " linguist," but this is unfortunate because it conveys the impression that the Kyiame is no more than an interpreter. In reality the Kyiame is the Spokesman or Mouthpiece of the Chief, who, being held sacred, must neither be addressed by, nor address another person directly. According to Mr. J. B. Danquah,* the word means " He who makes it perfect for me " : the Kyiame repeats and perfects what the Chief, who cannot always be an eloquent speaker, may have to say in public. He is a confidential officer whose place is at the Chief's right hand ; in the Council and Court of Judicature it is he who sums up and declares the Chief's will. He preserves in his memory and passes on the tradition of the Stool. Deeply versed in the etiquette of the court, he instructs a newly-appointed

* J. B. Danquah, *Akan Laws and Customs* (1928), pp. 42 sqq.

Chief. He can often turn the scales of war and peace since the issue of a dispute between contending tribes may depend upon whether he presents his Chief's case in a bellicose or a pacific manner. When he rises to speak in public he leans upon the gold cane or staff of his office, or a subordinate holds it in front of him. He may be sent by the Chief as a plenipotentiary or legate. What he says binds his Chief. There are two grades of the office. The superior grade is hereditary and is termed Omankyiame, i.e. the Kyiame of the whole Oman or Council. Kodwo Kwegyir ranked as Omankyiame.

It is an office of great dignity and responsibility, calling for uncommon tact, wisdom, adroitness, and powers of memory and eloquence. All these qualities Kodwo Kwegyir possessed in a rare degree, and passed them on to his son. His reputation stands high in the estimation of his people, who speak of his having preserved peace on many occasions. His son, our Aggrey, paid a fine tribute to his memory:—

"Because of my father's standing and relations, when in the olden days the Fantis fought a very bloody battle with the Elminians, he was selected by Anamabu to be the principal go-between to help bring about peace. He and his co-representatives succeeded. When Cape Coast and Anamabu States had a quarrel which threatened to end in one of the bloodiest fratricidal wars, the then Governor, Mr. Cruikshank, who stayed eighteen years on the Gold Coast, tried to settle the dispute, but failed. He called on my father, who heard statement after statement from both sides for days. When he stood up that memorable day as the Kyiame of the occasion to review and render the verdict as reached by him and his fellow-councillors, feelings had run high and blood was in the eyes of both sides. He stood for hours reviewing testimony after testimony. He could not read or write, but as the Kyiame of Akyiame * he never forgot, nor did he miss any point. When at the close of what is declared to be one of the most dramatic situations he delivered his

* Akyiame is the plural form of Kyiame.

verdict, both sides were satisfied, and so pleased was Governor Cruikshank with him and his remarkable work that day, he presented my father with five guineas in gold.

"At the great Fanti Confederation, when all the States of Fanti and their immediate allies came together for self-protection, for mutual understanding and self-development, my father, Kodwo Kwegyir, was one of the prime movers and Akyiame who spoke for a number of States. No wonder even in the calm days afterwards Anamabu, Cape Coast, Abura, Nkusukum and other States claimed him as their Kyiame.

" When Ashanti and Fanti were at war, the roads were always closed, but my father was one man who could go through at any time. A warrior of the first water, one who never dreaded bullets because he believed himself immune from them, he was foremost in line of battle, and first to counsel both sides to have peace. He was well known both in Fanti and Ashanti courts and universally respected. Both sides trusted him and he never betrayed his trust."

Some explanations seem to be necessary at this point. First as to the Fanti Confederation. The lack of union among the Fanti States always put them to great disadvantage in withstanding the attacks of their fierce and united neighbours, the Ashantis. When in 1865 the British Government thought of abandoning its forts on the coast, a committee of the House of Commons negatived the suggestion, recommended that the Government should hold on, but not extend its authority, and gave the Chiefs a plain hint that they should unite and form a strong government of their own. Later, in 1867, great commotion was caused by a proposal to hand over to the Dutch some of the States that had enjoyed British protection, and a Council of Chiefs agreed to combine and resist this scheme by force of arms. This plan failed of its object, but the suggestion of a Fanti Confederation revived a few years later. Once again, Kyiame Kwegyir and other far-sighted leaders raised the cry, Let us get together! And so at a meeting held at Mankessim on

October 16th, 1871, the lines were drawn of a form of Federal government. An executive council was set up, at the head of which was to be a King-President of the Confederation; and a representative assembly of two delegates from each State to prepare laws was planned. The promoters had in mind not only union for offensive and defensive warfare, but also the construction of roads, and the promotion of education, of agriculture and industry. Unfortunately the British Governor disapproved of this scheme; it was denounced as a dangerous conspiracy, and certain of the leaders were thrown into prison.

Kodwo Kwegyir was, as his son claims, a warrior as well as a councillor. He was Supi, or captain, of the Akomfudzi, one of the seven companies or Asafo into which the men of Anamabu were organised primarily for military, but also for social, purposes. Each company has its own traditions, emblems, insignia and place on the field of battle. On his removal to Cape Coast he transferred into another company, the Kyraim.

Kodwo Kwegyir led his company in at least three wars. The first was against the people of Wassaw; the second against the people of Elmina and the Dutch in 1867; and the third against the Ashantis in 1873. In the last campaign he took part in the battle of Yankumasi Assin, when the Ashantis were victorious. Notwithstanding his claim to immunity against bullets, he received three wounds that day.

Aggrey had a taste of war but no chance of emulating his father's exploits. In early life he refused to be initiated into his father's company, but later, in 1920, was given a lieutenancy, as a compliment, and he was installed at Anamabu as Kyiame. His true rôle was to be, as he said, spokesman for "my entire country, Africa, my Africa." The positions held by his father and mother, and his father's reputation, gave him great prestige in the country and enabled him in the last years of his life to wield enormous influence for good.

Kodwo Kwegyir lived to be over eighty * years of

* Aggrey used to say "ninety-five."

age. According to his position, as his son wrote to a friend in 1921, he could have married a dozen wives, or dozens ; " but although old before the missionary came, he contended that the rule, one man one wife, was the best. He married three times—never two at a time." By his first wife he had nine children, and four by the second. When he was over fifty years old he took as his third wife Abna Andua (or Annuah), a princess of Ajumako, an important town of northern Fantiland. She was the daughter of Kweku Eduonu and Amba Doma, and was one of eight children. Kweku Eduonu was connected with the ruling family of Enyan Denkera, a place lying about thirty-five miles from Cape Coast. He bore the reputation of being a skilled doctor. It was believed of him that by virtue of certain " medicine " he was absolutely immune from wounds ; the edge of a sword could not cut through his skin. It was also said that he could cleave a yam into two parts and then by a magic spell join them together again so closely that no scar was visible. He doctored his daughter to such good effect that no knife could prevail upon her—not the slightest cut could be made on her skin.

Among the Fantis succession to the Stool passes through the mother. Abna Andua's children were eligible for election to several chiefships—Aggrey himself gave the number as five. She belonged to the Akona (Agona), or the parrot clan (*abusua*), one of the seven totemic divisions of the Akan peoples. Since the clan relationship is reckoned matrilineally Aggrey was a " Parrot."*

Of Kodwo Kwegyir's union with Abna Andua eight children were born—four sons and four daughters. The first four saw the light at Anamabu ; two of these died in infancy ; the third, Araba Abonyiwa, was Aggrey's favourite sister and played an important part in his early life. She died in October, 1913. Aggrey was the fourth child—his father's seventeenth.

* Writing in 1926 to Nana Prempeh (Kweku Dua III), the famous Ashanti King, Aggrey said : " My mother told me long ago that she and all of us belong to the same clan as you."

DR. AGGREY, HIS MOTHER, AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY *Photo by L. Roy*

CHAPTER III

EARLY YEARS

EXCITEMENT reigns in the town of Anamabu this day of October, 1875. The rumour has spread that the Ashantis are preparing an army to wipe out the disgrace of the defeat which they suffered last year, when Sir Garnet Wolseley burnt their capital, Kumasi. The Fanti companies are being drilled and equipped to meet the enemy by the side of the British garrison. Bugles are sounding ; the war-drums are broadcasting their wireless messages. Amid the hubbub enters a grave and reverend senior, who calls men of his company around him and says : " Our armies may march before sunrise. We must go through the customary ceremony with the child without delay. Here, Kwamin, tell the women to get everything ready. Summon the members of the family. The gods declare that this child will bring back to the house of Kwegyir much of its departed glory."

The preparations are duly made. As the sun is sinking in the west friends assemble, the men wearing the toga-like costume woven at home, the women wearing the *tekua*, the peculiar headdress of the Fantis. The most venerable member of the father's family takes the sleeping child from its mother's back, and sprinkles rum and then water on its lips, slowly repeating the words : " When it is yea, say yea ; when it is nay, say nay."

The eight-day-old Aggrey has received from the elders his first lesson.

The ceremony over, preparations for war are resumed. But the rumour of invasion proves to be false, and life in town reflows in its normal course.

The birth had been a felicitous one and the happy mother celebrated the occasion by composing and singing a little song :

Kweku ne yer Ekua, Kweku ne yer Ekua
Mo kɔr odum ase. Nwaba da hɔa,
Me taatar hɔn gyan.

Which may be translated thus :

" Kweku's wife, Kweku's wife came to a 'normous tree,
Gathered snails, gathered snails, no let had she."

The explanation is plain : " I am a woman who has the good fortune to bring forth children with ease."

At the ceremony we have described, one or more names were given to the boy. In later years, when he wrote his names in full they appeared thus : James Emman Kodwo Mensa Otsiwadu Humamfunsam Kwegyir Aggrey.*

It was not long before Kudjo (or Kodwo) Mensa had another Kudjo to play with—Kudjo Awir. After his appearance Abna Andua sang a melancholy rune.

Awir Nsaku, w'awow ye yaa,
Ndwamansem yem' tan
Oni, oni, oni, krodo !

" Awir, little giant,
To bear you what pain !
Awir, little greedy,
My bosom you drain:
God grant I be never
In travail again ! "

* James was the baptismal name. The others he explained thus : Emman, " Great City " ; Kodwo, " male child born on Monday " ; Mensa, " third male child " ; Otsiwadu, " tenth after Otsiwa " ; Humamfunsam, " wide-ruling Agamemnon " ; Kwegyir, father's name; Aggrey, family name. [Kwegyir is said to be a contraction of Kwawu Egyir. Egyir seems to have been the original family name of the father, and to have been anglicised " Aggrey."] One of my informants says that the name Mensa was given " to perpetuate the memory of a childless uncle." There may be more in it than this. The uncle was possibly regarded as the boy's guardian spirit ; or even (or as well) as being actually reborn in him. The Fantis believed in reincarnation.

But that prayer was not answered, and by the time the eighth and last child was come, Abna Andua had collected quite a repertory of songs. The best of them was another about the little giant.

Kudjo Awir, enyikam' kron,
Nsu tɔr a ɔnkã,
Ɔyɛ dɛ Atwɛr a
Ɔbɔbɔ mo bo !
Refrain : *Eku-dum ! Eku-dum !*
Kudjo Kakraka.

" Kudjo Awir, your eyes nestle deep
All safe from the rain,
Come, drop on my bosom,
You little fat frog !
Eku-dum, Eku-dum,
Kudjo Kakraka ! "

A. W. E. Appiah, Aggrey's nephew, writes of his grandmother that she is " a woman of great mirth, wit and humour, fond of children, especially those who love play and fun." It is a charming picture that we are given of the happy mother surrounded by her jolly children. Whenever they heard her crooning the latest baby on her back they left their play, or their household tasks, and ran to her for a dance. Round and roundabout they leapt and dived, dived and leapt, while she crouched on a low stool, swaying her body and clapping her hands to keep time. Soon the spell would be cast ; the infant slept, the dancers vanished ; and Abna Andua would puff and fan herself after the exertion, eyeing with indulgent disapproval the unswept compound and the empty water calabash.

And now into this happy family, the father a pillar of the ancient State, the mother a daughter of a renowned " medicine man," came a soul-transforming breath, bringing new joys, fresh hopes and ambitions. The family became Christian.

The Wesleyan Methodists had in 1834 sent out Joseph Dunwell in response to earnest solicitations of boys in the Government school at Cape Coast, presented through Captain Potter, a seaman in command of a trading vessel.

Dunwell died of fever within six months of landing, but not before he had missioned Anamabu, the home of the Aggreys. In 1838, a very remarkable man, Thomas B. Freeman, the son of a Negro slave married to an English woman, arrived in Cape Coast. In the following year he visited Anamabu, where under his directions a church was built. He laboured with true apostolic fervour until 1857, when he retired in consequence of disagreements with the committee of his society in England. Two years before Aggrey's birth, he took up the work again and became superintendent minister of the Anamabu circuit, which at that time reported a membership of 1,400, the largest in the Mission.

We have no certainty that Freeman's ministry ever exerted any influence on the minds of Kodwo Kwegyir and his wife. But it may be that some seed cast by the faithful sower had fallen upon that generous soil. After removing to Cape Coast Kodwo Kwegyir frequented the Wesleyan church. On June 24th, 1883, his two sons, Kudjo Mensa and Kudjo Awir, were baptised and, according to the prevalent custom, the foreign names, James and William respectively, were bestowed on them. The church register gives the father's name as Robert Aggrey, which seems to show that he was already baptised, though there appears to be no record of the fact.

In after years Aggrey was wont to say : " My father and mother, brothers and sisters, became Christians through me. I got a taste for this thing when I was eight years old. I could not tell my father enough." The picture of the renowned Omankyiame sitting at the feet of his young son and learning from him the little he knew is one we would fain not be robbed of.

In later life Aggrey was wont rightly to insist that Africans possess their own system of education—if education means handing on to the fresh generation the accumulated experiences of the past and so fitting it to take its place in the tribe. The Aggrey home was also a school and the teachers were mainly Kodwo Kwegyir and Abna Andua. Household duties were part of the

training, the games another. The telling of tales was a chief means of linking the children with the past. When the family gathered in the evening around the domestic fire-pot the father and mother related the family traditions going back to the ancestor who fought at Ghineah, the doings of the Akomfudzi Company, the astonishing feats of their grandfather, Kweku Eduonu, the famous medicine man. There were delightful tales of animals and men, too, and these were not only amusing and thrilling, but conveyed unobtrusively many a moral lesson. All these things were printed indelibly upon the minds of the children. Kodwo Kwegyir used to take his son into court with him and tell him to watch the people as they came in and study their characters. "This man," he would say, "is a lion—that, a jackal." There were also religious lessons. It was no doubt from his parents that Aggrey first acquired the African (or at least Akan) conception of the Supreme Being as the Father-Mother God. In after years he delighted to tell European audiences about it. Among his papers I found a list of the titles which his people give to God: *Obatan Nyami*, "The Nursing-mother God"; *Nyami*, "He whom if you have you are always satisfied"; *Nyankupon*, "The greatest, biggest Friend," and so on.

To the end of his life Aggrey retained beliefs that he imbibed in these early years, some of them strangely incongruent with the scientific and Christian doctrines which he was afterwards taught. For instance, he never ceased to credit the possibility of being immunised against wounds. When he recounted his experiences in the Ashanti Expedition, friends would ask whether he was ever hurt and he would reply: "Of course not, my father administered medicine to make me immune." He believed in metempsychosis (a word which, by the way, he was fond of rolling round his tongue), and particularly in the power of certain people to change themselves into birds. On one occasion when as a youth he left home, his boy-slave wished to accompany him, but Kodwo Kwegyir sternly forbade him. "Never mind,

master," said the boy, "I'll be there with you." One night as Aggrey was sleeping in the forest a little bird settled on his chest. When he returned home his slave asked whether anything had happened on a certain night, and Aggrey told him about this bird. "That was I," the boy said. Aggrey told his friend Hannum in America that once he was ill and the nearest doctor was two hundred miles off. The doctor promised to be with him on a certain day and never came, but a bird came and sat upon Aggrey and he grew better; he firmly believed it was the doctor. One night at Achimota, his wife found a bird in her room when she retired. She called Aggrey and asked him to remove it as she could not sleep while it was there. He was the most obliging and indulgent of husbands, but on this occasion he firmly refused to do what Mrs. Aggrey asked. "Who knows who that bird is, and what blessing it has brought us?" he said.

Aggrey's parents imbued him with a strong sense of the family dignity and honour. *Noblesse oblige* was always one of his favourite mottoes. In his turn he passed it on to his children and nephews. "An Aggrey keeps his word," he would say.

Kodwo Kwegyir (as we may continue to name Aggrey's father) could not read or write, but he was anxious that his children should enjoy the privileges offered in the schools established by Europeans. Aggrey entered the Wesleyan Methodist school at Cape Coast shortly before his eighth birthday. At first, slates and benches and the confinement to four walls for so many hours a day were irksome to the boy; but soon he discovered that school afforded its own delights. Week by week he would bring home fresh trophies to be admired by his beloved sister Abonyiwa: the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed learnt by heart in English, "Thirty days hath September," the multiplication tables. He

greedily absorbed everything presented to him. He had the good fortune to learn under exceptionally able teachers.

Although Aggrey grew strong and healthy, his mother complained of his thinness. " What a belly ! " she would say, " more like that of a flattened fish than that of a healthy Fanti man-child ! " She fully disapproved his distaste for *fufu*—the staple dish of yams and palm-oil. Awir liked him all the better for this, since he took both shares. Awir detested books as much as Aggrey detested *fufu*. The three brothers attended school for some years together and were known as Aggrey A, Aggrey B, and Aggrey C. Our Aggrey was the eldest and keenest and by the time that he was fourteen was left alone, his brothers having gone out into the wide world before they reached standard vi. Awir fell into evil ways and died while still a young man of drinking vermouth. The other brother, Amerehiya, became a wanderer. Long years afterwards when Aggrey was travelling as a member of the Phelps-Stokes Commission he met his brother on board ship at Sierra Leone and tried hard to induce him to return to Cape Coast, but Amerehiya refused to abandon his occupation as ship's laundryman.

As they grew up the two eldest children, Araba Abonyiwa and Aggrey, were happiest when together. They played games : Ampeh, which is not unlike " Pease porridge hot," but requiring more skill and providing more exercise, and Warre, the almost universal African pastime, played with a " board " and stones. Abonyiwa was the only playmate whom her brother found difficult to beat. One day she committed an offence that called for a flogging. Aggrey pleaded with his father to thrash him in her stead, and complacently received the strokes heartily laid on.

When Aggrey was nine years of age his father called him aside. Kodwo Kwegyir always used an old clay jug for drinking. No other person was allowed to touch it. The children came to associate it with their father's mysterious duties and powers as Omankyiame. Now he

took the jug, filled it with water and told his son to drain it. "As thou drinkest," said he, " thy father's wisdom and powers of speech will pass into thee. Henceforward we shall share this jug and thou shalt prepare thyself to follow in thy father's footsteps. When thou becomest a man thou shalt do in a great way what I have done in a small way." Aggrey never forgot that experience and his father's earnest words.

But they cast no cloud of priggishness and solemnity over the merry days of his boyhood. He was now diligently pursuing knowledge as it is found in books. Rising earlier than other members of the family, he would do his share of the water-carrying and sweeping and then, hiding a little ball of *kenki* (boiled maize) under his cloth with his book, would slip away to Amanfu on the seashore and read till school-time. Rarely was he lower than fourth in his class. Every day he could be seen walking across Chapel Square, the centre of the town, oblivious of everything but the book upon which his eyes were glued. But with all his studiousness he was as much a trial to his teachers as the most barbaric of his schoolmates. He was eternally restless. He could never keep silent for long together. Flogging was systematically employed in school as a punishment for talking, as for other offences, and large was the pile of broken rods by the teacher's desk at the close of the day. The aristocracy of the town sent their sons to school, accompanied by a servant to carry their books and to act the whipping-boy. Aggrey had no such privileges. The lack of a substitute did not mean less mischief on his part, but was rather a stimulus to avoid reaping what he had sown. Each week-end the teacher directed three leading boys of the class to cut the flogging-sticks for use during the next week—a direct incentive to trickery. Aggrey and his companions decided one day to notch the rods, so that hard strokes would cause them to splinter. On Monday morning the teacher laid on lustily as usual. The boys writhed under the punishment—they were consummate actors. The stick fell in pieces. After a week or two they

grew careless in notching ; their trick was discovered, and swift retribution fell.

The elect group to which Aggrey belonged used to announce at home on a Saturday morning that their services were required at the Mission and would beg for a penny to buy food—to tide them over the long morning's work. Their mothers being persuaded, the young sportsmen, perhaps a dozen in number, meet, pool their resources and rush to the market. Around them sound the mammies' cries :

" Here are hot roast plantains ! stout ones, cheap ones ! Buy ! Buy ! "

" Buy my nicely scented fish ! Buy quick, or all will go ! "

" Come for *obudabu* [yam-balls fried in palm-oil], four for a penny and a dried fish thrown in ! "

The urchins stroll haughtily amid the turmoil, sniffing this and that. But the vision of twelve times four *obudabu*, flavoured with dried fish, is not to be dismissed. *Obudabu* it is then. Laden with spoil they leave the madding crowd and repair to their appointed rendezvous, a broken hut by the sea. Here they gorge to their hearts' content. Most of them are amphibious—it goes hard with any youth of the company who cannot swim. So, after a decent interval, they take to the water. . . . The sun shows them the time ; their appetites confirm it ; and home they go, appearing tired and virtuous in the family circle to attack with zeal the noonday fish-pot.

Their dramatic sense occasionally found another outlet at school when they were allowed to act scenes from English history. Young Aggrey was very pleased with himself as Canute. His friends were courtiers and waves, and it is not certain how far this monarch suffered the waves to disobey him.

Such days were mere interludes in a busy life. The sons of wealthy merchants might enjoy much leisure, but boys in Aggrey's position had to work at home out of school hours. In the eyes of most parents, school was an extra to be fitted as might be in the intervals of the daily

routine. The boys were called to go to the farms with their fathers, there to assist in planting yams, in hilling and harvesting. They helped at mother's stall in the market, or at father's shop. Aggrey spent many an "after four" in running errands from Gold Taker Kwegyir's room below Merchant Sarbah's store. If there were not sufficient daughters about the house, the sons must fetch water and sweep. It was rare that three out of four children enrolled at school were actually in attendance.

Aggrey was now to fall under the influence of one who greatly helped to mould his career. The Rev. Dennis Kemp, a Wesleyan missionary, arrived at Cape Coast in January, 1888. He was too clear-eyed not to see the realities of the situation : the filthy homes, the indolence, the untruthfulness, the grovelling sycophancy, the class distinctions drawn between the civilised "coaster" and his fellow-countrymen dwelling in the bush, the gross immoralities, the superficial education that labelled "scholar" any person who could write a mis-spelt letter, the tendency to learn the pronunciation of English words without any ability to comprehend their meaning, the vogue of a purely scholastic training which fitted (or did not fit) lads for clerkships but did nothing to teach handicraft, and the neglect by the schools of the pupils' home-speech. The Sunday schools languished for want of vernacular books, "and in the day schools the younger scholars were learning to read English without having the remotest idea of the meaning of the words."*

* Dennis Kemp, *Nine Years at the Gold Coast* (1898), p. 30. Dr. C. A. Gordon tells of meeting some girls who informed him they were mission pupils. "Do you know the first chapter of Genesis?" he asked. They repeated it at railroad speed. "What do you mean by 'without form and void'?" "I no know dat, massa. Missionary teach me word. No teach me meaning," was the reply.—*Life on the Gold Coast* (1881), p. 7.

Photo by Dennis Kemp

THE BOYS IN THE REV. DENNIS KEMP'S HOUSE READY FOR THEIR DIP IN THE SEA

Notice the bottles of fresh water

Many of these faults were not repaired till long afterwards. Mr. Kemp proposed to remedy some of them by taking twenty young people into the spacious mission house—" the most palatial residence in Cape Coast "—where the Wesleyan insistence on " Cleanliness next to godliness " might be applied to them, and where other habits, besides sound learning, might be inculcated. He also established workshops in which a number of lads received training as joiners, blacksmiths and house-decorators.

Aggrey was one of the favoured twenty to enter the House. To each group of four boys a room was allotted for sleep and study. Parents supplied food and paid fees. The pupils were supplied with whitewash, paint and pictures to make their rooms clean and attractive. Every morning Mrs. Kemp made a tour of inspection. She and her husband regarded the boys as their family and were devoted to them. Prayers were held first thing in the morning and last thing at night around the big dining-room table.

During school hours Aggrey and other advanced pupils who took rank as monitors assisted in teaching at the day school. In the evenings they gathered around Mr. Kemp, who instructed them in the popular high-school subjects: science, logic, mensuration, Euclid. Aggrey became more than ever engrossed in his books. " I want to know everything," he would declare passionately. No time now for games. The garden which the Kemps encouraged the family to tend was to him a thing of outer darkness. He lived for books. His room-mates went in terror lest he should sully their honour at the morning inspection by leaving an unmade bed or an open book on the floor. Often he would stay up reading long after the others were asleep. It is said that he would, when weary, tie a soaked towel around his head and sit with his feet in a basin of cold water. In the morning his great chum, who slept next to him, often secretly supplemented Aggrey's perfunctory efforts to collect his belongings and tidy his portion of the room. Nor did he take

more interest in his clothes. While his younger brother had already begun to imitate, in swagger and dress, the Cape Coast bloods, Aggrey was content to go about in shabby alpaca.

The Bible class held on Friday evenings was very popular with the lads. They prepared essays, which, after being read and criticised in class, were read in senior school on the Monday following.

Aggrey was a religious boy. One thinks of him as a natural Christian. Baptised at the age of eight, he now at fourteen became definitely converted. The decision was taken during a series of evangelistic services held by one of the missionaries in the school Assembly Hall.

It was to be expected that with his character and training Aggrey should become a teacher and enter the ministry. Some practice he had already gained in teaching; now an opportunity was offered of proving his mettle. Mr. Kemp had been appointed to the oversight of the Abura and Assin circuit, which stretched from within a few miles of Cape Coast to the river Prahsu. He needed a temporary teacher at Abura Dunkwa, a village twenty miles from Cape Coast. Aggrey eagerly accepted the post and, greatly excited, prepared to set out with his beloved master on the first great adventure of his life. He took with him a dozen books, two loaves of bread, three-pennyworth of loaf-sugar, and a small amount of money presented by various friends.

Mr. Kemp and Aggrey made a two days' journey of it. At Ekroful they slept in the chapel, Mr. Kemp in the pulpit, Aggrey on one of the benches. At Dunkwa, writes Mr. Kemp, "a cot was placed at our disposal. This we shared: it was originally intended for the accommodation of one person. I have often felt, as I have read of the unfeeling treatment he received later in life, owing to his colour, particularly thankful that there was a time at any rate in the adolescent period of his life when he knew that colour was no barrier to deep-seated affection."

Arrived at their destination, Aggrey penned a letter,

which, as the first of his on record, may well be transcribed here* :

To The Rev. Dennis Kemp. Dunkwa.
Dear Sir, *March 13th*, 1890.

I am glad to announce to you my safe arrival at Dunkwa. I feel comfortable here. We started from Cape Coast at about some minutes to 7. And we came to Asabu-Amanfi at some minutes past three [? nine], where after drinking some coco nuts and talking to the man about school, we rested for three hours and started at one. From there we came to Ekroful. We ate there, and wanted to reach Dunkwa but rain fell for about more than two hours. So we did not reach the place. And as Mr. Kemp had sent or written to the Rev. he wrote him that because of the rain we did not reach. We, after reading some passage, prayed individually loudly [audibly] and after that we prayed silently and slept. He slept in the pulpit. We reached the place on Monday morning at about ½8 [8.30]. I went to school the morning also the evening, and I also went to school on the Tuesday morning but not the evening. Please do not forget to tell my parents that I have reached safely. And I'm comfortable here. Please do so also to my sisters and brother. Please tell all the boys about it and with compts. Please do so also to the Monitors and teachers. With compts to you, to them all in the school. I have about or nearly thirty boys to teach. The first-class boys read No. 11 Card.

Your humble servant, J. E. Aggrey.

In sole control of a school of from thirty to forty boys, Aggrey, at fifteen years of age, was now compelled to show what powers of leadership he possessed. He succeeded in raising the standard of his pupils' work. Not the day school only, but the Sunday school also went ahead under his enthusiastic guidance. He seemed to have the powers of a Pied Piper over children, and soon his Sunday school was the largest on the circuit. They liked him partly because he was fond of teaching them songs. Sankey's " Standing by a purpose true " was a favourite with him : the boys called it " Teacher Aggrey's song."

* This letter, it will be observed, was written as if Mr. Kemp were a third person.

Every Saturday his sister Abonyiwa walked the twenty miles from Cape Coast, bringing news as well as good home food cooked by herself. She helped with the Sunday school and on Monday returned to Cape Coast on foot.

Years afterwards Aggrey wrote as follows to the old students of the Teachers' Training College at Accra on the Gold Coast:

"My heart beats sympathetically toward every teacher for I myself have taught both in town and in the hinterland. To you who are teaching in the villages as well as in the larger cities I send a cheer. I know your loneliness, your trials, and temptations. I know, for I am one of you. In 1889 [1890] I was sent to Dunkwa—Abura Dunkwa—to teach a village school. I was kindergarten teacher, primary teacher, headmaster and all. That was 37 years ago. I learned much there, and the friends I made there have helped me to this day. I was lonely as well as lonesome sometimes, and yet it was there I learned to farm and to know the difference between *mpindua* and *nduapim*,* to fall in love with nature and to understand how the bamboo and the shadow woo and wed by sunny fountains clear. My salary was at the start six shillings and eightpence a month, paid quarterly. I know and I sympathise. And yet looking back upon my life, if I had the chance to live it over again, I would gladly do it again if those self-sacrificing and optimistic teachers—white missionaries, men and women—were also to be around. One of the things that kept me up was the faith my old teachers, black and white, had in me. Those white missionaries felt I could not fail. They believed that Africans, though untutored, could be redeemed and join the angelic train. And I prayed God to help me never to disappoint them."

Aggrey arrived at Dunkwa an amiable and keen-witted lad. A year later he returned to Cape Coast and the Mission House, with a touch of manhood about him. He was appointed assistant teacher in his old school and threw his energies breathlessly into many activities for the next seven years.

* A clever play on words formed by reversing the syllables.

CHAPTER IV

AIMING HIGHER

CAPE COAST had for long been one of the chief points of contact between the African inhabitants of the territory and the European merchants and officials. When the Portuguese first settled there at the beginning of the seventeenth century the native town consisted of a few rude huts surrounded by a fence of reeds. The imposing castle, which rises on a ledge stretching some distance into the sea, was built some years later by the Swedes. It changed hands rapidly, being seized first by the Dutch and then by the British, who have held it since 1664. A few years after that date the town contained five hundred houses. At the time of which we are writing the inhabitants numbered about 12,000. These were for the most part crowded into dwellings built of "swish" or unwrought clay, some thatched, others with flat mud roofs which frequently collapsed during heavy rains. The wealthier Africans occupied houses of brick, modelled on European style and covered with corrugated iron. The buildings were huddled together—"as though they had been shaken down out of a sack to serve as dunnage," said Miss Mary Kingsley, who visited Cape Coast in 1893. The two principal streets were planted with rows of the wild fig or umbrella tree, a kind of hibiscus. On an eminence at one end of the street running upwards from the Castle stood the large Wesleyan Church. The Aggreys' house faced on Abudu street.

Up to 1876 Cape Coast had been the capital of the British settlements, but in that year the seat of administration was removed to Accra. It still remained an im-

portant commercial centre. At this time the tides of western civilisation were on the flood. Traders and prospectors multiplied; the talk was of gold mines and machinery and railways. A bank was opened, newspapers sprang into being. Larger ships appeared off the coast.

The younger generation quaffed the heady wine with enthusiasm. They were frankly eager to throw off everything that belonged to the past and to absorb western culture.

Education, they saw, was the golden key that would unlock the mysteries of the English universe, and the English language the road to knowledge and wealth. That knowledge is power was a creed passionately accepted. The journals never tired of quoting Bacon, "Reading maketh a full man," and Lytton, "Reading is the key to knowledge," and Montaigne, "No entertainment is so cheap as reading, nor any pleasure so lasting." It was found "pitiably monstrous" that "we cannot all of us make up our minds to invest some moiety of our earnings in acquiring books in these golden days when books can be acquired for a song." The staffs of the leading journals combined to subscribe to English periodicals and published special features headed "Gleanings," "Curiosities of Literature," and the like. The Wesleyan Mission had opened a book depot in the town, and by 1895 the annual sales amounted to over £1,000. Reading rooms were opened, literary societies were organised, debates were held on weighty subjects. To those who could not attend school during the week, reading and writing were taught at Sunday school. "Examination picnics" became the vogue, when under a reverend umpire spelling and reading matches were the order of the day.

Education and Christianity advanced hand in hand. Not only Literary and Debating Societies but also Singing Bands, Bands of Hope, Christ's Little Bands and Y.M.C.A.'s flourished. More important than any of these were the Sunday schools. The Church increased rapidly in numbers. The Wesleyans were strict about ad-

mitting to membership, but during this period (1887-96) their full members on the Gold Coast grew from 5,600 to 7,600; junior members from 1,000 to over 5,000; Sunday school scholars from 1,700 to 12,000. Over fifty chapels were built. The journals gave accounts of whole villages being converted. Reports of progress, often a column and a half in length, appeared in their pages.

Everyday life in Cape Coast took on the colour of the Victorian era. The school Assembly Hall would echo one evening to the resolutions passed by the local branch of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals; the next it would be filled with an enthusiastic audience treated to a magic lantern lecture on The Stately Homes of England, followed by "selections on a patent organ which combines the whole effect of a brass band in itself." A photographer executed "portraits on opal-mounted or silk plush blocks, also on gilt-edged glasses." Beeton's *Complete Etiquette for English Gentlemen* sold at the Bookshop.* English clothing and English names were postulates of the Christian life.

It was undoubtedly an English Kingdom of God that the Cape Coast prophets looked forward to. So much English (of a sort) was spoken that the Wesleyan missionaries did not, as a rule, think it necessary to learn the language of the country. They preached in English. Mr. Freeman introduced the practice of reading the English liturgy at the morning service in the Wesleyan Church, and at that service even the African ministers delivered their sermons in English and the hymns and lessons were all in that tongue. The vernacular had its turn in the evening.

A reaction was bound to set in, sooner or later, against this excessive Anglicisation. Some years after the period with which we are dealing, men like J. M. Sarbah and Casely Hayford (both trained lawyers) impressed upon the people the necessity of reconsidering the future of their native land. Missionaries were reminded that they

* Advertisements in contemporary newspapers.

should study the religious system of the African before trying to improve it or introducing a new one; they were asked, Why should not the native convert sing his own native songs and play his native airs in Church? "Why, in the name of reason and common sense, should he not bear his own name and wear his own native garments?" They themselves, by the way, always dressed in European fashion. While protesting their loyalty to the British Crown, they protested with equal vehemence against the ignoring of African institutions and any attempt to deal with the people as if they had no past. They came to see the peril of denationalisation by means of western methods of education, and urged that the young should be trained on a vernacular basis and be turned out men—"no effete, mongrel product of foreign systems." They called for a system of education that should, among other things, teach how best the agricultural and industrial resources of the country might be so developed as to create permanent national interests.*

But these voices were not yet to be heard. The headlong impetus towards English ways continued. And if we regret that the Cape Coast people of that day should throw off so lightly much that was of value in their ancient heritage, we cannot but acknowledge the boundless hope and generous enthusiasms which filled them.

BACK at Cape Coast after his year's experience at Dunkwa, Aggrey shared to the full in the excitements and activities of the naissance.

The Wesleyan Centenary Memorial School (built in 1891) was now the centre of his life. His teaching, as old pupils still remember, was literally breathless. He threw every ounce of his enthusiasm into a lesson. He would wax so warm that he forgot to breathe till he choked;

* J. M. Sarbah, *Fanti National Constitution* (1906), p. xviii, etc. Casely Hayford, *Gold Coast Native Institutions* (1903), pp. 105-6.

then he would gulp down a large breath, and repeat the process. He would pick up a boy's book and read with such explosive vigour that he sputtered all over the page. He expected pupils to be as quick as himself. If he had any method in teaching it was the method of being sudden and of almost hypnotising his boys into being sudden in perception. "Have you got it?" he would say. "Get it now, quickly; I may never tell you this again." To the intelligent he gave of his time lavishly; for the dull and indifferent, I fear, he had little patience. "My! he could give the cane!" one of his old pupils said feelingly to me. Some of the boys in his class were older than himself; and I am assured that if they had detected any sign of weakness in the teacher they might have gone for him. Strict as he was, he was liked by the pupils, for he got them through their examinations. Occasionally the Head Master would send for Aggrey, intending to rebuke him for impatience. Aggrey would come primed with some disarming anecdote which sent the master into fits of mirth. Then, knowing the man and the moment, Aggrey would vanish unrebuked.

Much of his spare time was given to study. In 1894 we find him asking for lessons in preparation for the Cambridge local examination. At another time he is studying Magnetism and Electricity. He traded with missionaries, giving instruction in the Fanti language in return for lessons in French, Latin and Psychology. It was impossible for him to keep this knowledge to himself. Youngsters in the lower classes became used to hearing of the mysteries of Cæsar's Gallic wars and the activities of afferent and efferent nerves. Of all Latin tags he loved best Cæsar's "Veni, vidi, vici." He could set a class aflame by talking about it, for at that time he was himself in a hurry to conquer the world—and the suddenness of this man Cæsar caught him.

The more active youth of Cape Coast organised a drum and fife band. Teacher Aggrey was minded to join, but since his poor ear for music debarred him from the pipes, he chose for his instrument the small drum known in

Fanti as *tanta-ba*. To be a mere drummer boy was, however, hardly consonant with his dignity and he therefore coined from *tanta-ba* a title for himself—" tantabulator." The whole band, who knew his love for long words, were so overjoyed by this that they bestowed the title upon him in perpetuity ; and Tantabulator he remained long after the drum and fife band had marched, as boys' societies have a way of marching, into the limbo of forgotten things.

Then, as later, words exercised over Aggrey an irresistible fascination. He loved the roll and mystery of big new words. " In the tropics, nature excels herself in superabundant productiveness "—is a sentence in one of his youthful essays. When he could not find a word to suit him he invented one : " The tropician is satisfied on land, the frigidian ever on the icy waters, but the inhabitant of the temperate enjoys the golden medium."

The teachers were required to interpret the sermons delivered in church by the Wesleyan missionaries. The whole discourse would be given first in English and then repeated by the assistant in Fanti. Aggrey was, by the common consent of his fellow-teachers, the best of them all at this exercise, for he could not only remember a sermon almost word for word, but could embellish it so splendidly !

At the age of sixteen he was permitted to preach by the Wesleyan authorities. His studies were for a time directed towards the ministry. In 1912 we find him writing to encourage one of his nephews by relating his own achievements in learning, and among other things he says : " When I was being trained for the ministry I ranked first in Greek, in Latin, in Bible History, in Logic, in Exegesis, yes, first in everything."

It appears that the Wesleyans had worked on the Gold Coast forty-three years before they took steps to give the Fantis any literature in their own tongue. The African ministers, where English was not understood, were reduced to the expedient of translating the lessons in church as they went along. In 1882 the Rev. W. M.

Cannell prepared a grammar and dictionary of Fanti. Before this, in 1877, the Rev. A. W. Parker, an African minister, had translated the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark, and in later years he completed a version of the New Testament. One of Mr. Parker's colleagues, the Rev. J. B. Anaman, was appointed with Aggrey to examine this book before it was printed. They went through it together and retranslated certain passages into what they thought to be more correct Fanti. Aggrey also helped Mr. Anaman in preparing a book of Fanti hymns.

Aggrey was in fact Mr. Anaman's right-hand man at this time. As Anaman was superintendent of the Cape Coast Sunday schools, so Aggrey was the secretary. The faithful in Cape Coast may not have believed that the Kingdom of God cometh with observation, but they appear to have believed that it comes of sufficient organisation. When in doubt, " organise " seems to have been their view, and they must have added, When in doubt, make Teacher Aggrey secretary. He was made secretary of the Band of Hope, secretary of Christ's Little Band, secretary of the City Sports Club.

Kodwo Kwegyir watched his son's growing influence with pride and with much sympathy, though he was too old fully to understand and appreciate the revolutionary tides which were sweeping forward the younger generation. Between Aggrey and his brother Awir the gulf was widening, for the younger was finding ever-increasing pleasure in the fashionable vermouth and other things. Aggrey, even when Headmaster of the school, always washed his own clothes ; Awir, as soon as he began his clerkship, employed a laundress. Common sympathies, on the other hand, strengthened the affection between Aggrey and his sister Abonyiwa. She was one of the leading girls in the Fanti Singing Band, and one of the first in Cape Coast to give up the waist-cloth and take to wearing the loose blouse (known as " the cover-shoulder ") advocated by the Mission. Abonyiwa looked after the marketing for the household.

One Sunday, as Aggrey went to share the midday meal

with his family, he was horrified to see Abonyiwa weeping. He called his younger sister and asked what ailed her. On Saturday, it appeared, Abonyiwa had brought a fish from the market for the Sunday dinner, and when Awir pleaded that he was very hungry and would like to eat some of that fish, then and there she declined to allow him to do so. The fish was prepared, but next morning on returning from Sunday school Abonyiwa found that it had disappeared. The blame was put on the cat, but Kodwo Kwegyir could not resist the temptation to tease his daughter. Evidently, he said, she was more fond of the cat than of her brother, for she had refused him the fish and had allowed the cat to have it; whence those tears. Aggrey handed ten shillings to the younger sister, asking her to give them to Abonyiwa on condition that she stopped crying.

Always a lover of peace and concord, Aggrey could not brook quarrelling, nor indeed any kind of unpleasantness. If he could do nothing to stop it he would leave the house.

Aggrey was minded to sit for a scholarship at the Government school in Accra, but since he had now to assist in supporting the family, his father having failed in health, he abandoned the idea. Needing more money, he penned a characteristic letter to the Rev. Dennis Kemp, the general superintendent of the Mission, asking for an increase in his stipend of 35s. a month. He concluded thus :

> " To show how I am in need I would mention that when you were the manager of this school I sometimes stayed my stipend for more than two months with you, but now even in the middle of the month I sometimes go for an advance before it ends, and when I receive it, it is not sufficient. Father, I beg to say once more that if I have said anything in this [letter] which may grieve you, or which has not been well said, I beg most obediently to be excused, for the language is not mine, and I do not know how to express myself in the politest way possible."

Aggrey was relieved of financial anxiety. As, for

various reasons, one teacher after another left the Wesleyan Centenary Memorial School, he mounted until at the age of twenty he had become second in command. In 1898, in succession to the Rev. J. B. Graham, who entered the ministry, he became Headmaster. He had taken all the Teachers' Certificate examinations offered by the Department of Education; and in the last and most important of these (in 1895) had stood first among the 119 candidates who entered, and was the only one who gained a second class. The certificate qualified him, without further examination, to teach in any similar school in British colonies. The Legislative Council voted him £15 worth of books in recognition of his success. He was the means of raising the school to such a standard of excellence that the Director of Education said, after one visit, that there was no better in the colony. The numbers on the roll were over 400. On one occasion every pupil who entered for it passed the examination.

The year 1896 saw Aggrey, now twenty-one years of age, in full activity. If it brought him adventures of a new kind, it also brought him a great sorrow. It was his custom to spend vacations with friends other than members of his family. The Rev. J. B. Anaman, who at this time was in some degree his spiritual father, was now living at Saltpond, a few miles from Cape Coast, and in the summer of 1896 Aggrey visited him there. He delighted in doing the most menial tasks—dusting books, brushing shoes—for the man he loved. He was there when he received news of his father's death. His feelings may be imagined when we remember the intimate relations that had existed between them from early days and the reverence with which he always spoke of his father in later years. It is told in the family that on his deathbed Kodwo Kwegyir prophesied that his son would, in two years' time, go to a far country and would return after a

long stay to do on a great scale what he himself had done on a small scale.

The Christmas vacation brought the adventure.

Aggrey took a humble part in the seventh Ashanti War —if war it can be called where no shot was fired. To enforce certain demands upon Prempeh, the Ashanti king, an expedition was sent, comprising British troops with Native allies, under Colonel Sir Francis Cunninghame Scott, a veteran of the Crimea and of the Indian Mutiny, who was then Inspector-General of the Gold Coast Constabulary. On his staff were two Princes: Henry of Battenberg and Christian Victor. Mr. Kemp entertained twenty officers in the Mission House at Cape Coast and placed the school at the disposal of the army as a barracks. Interpreters being called for, Aggrey volunteered and was attached to the Telegraph Corps under Captain R. S. Curtis and Lieut. McInnes. The expedition marched from Cape Coast at the end of December, 1896. The Telegraph Corps went ahead laying their line on the trees along a track cut through the bush or running it along the ground close to the path, at the astonishing rate of two and a half miles an hour.

There was no fighting, but fever and dysentery claimed many victims, including Prince Henry, who, invalided, died at sea. The expedition entered Kumasi on January 17th, 1897, and two days later an impressive Church Parade was conducted by Canon Taylor Smith (afterwards Chaplain-General) and the Rev. W. Somerville, who was one of Aggrey's teachers. Aggrey remembered standing by the side of Prince Christian at this service; and also that he was entertained in Kumasi by Prempeh's chief Linguist—a mark of respect for his father. Perhaps he witnessed the famous Palaver when Prempeh was so bitterly humiliated before the Governor, and was arrested because he would not, or could not, pay at once the huge indemnity of 50,000 oz. of gold demanded of him. Perhaps he also witnessed the blowing up of the "Fetish Tree" in the market place of Kumasi. The column left Kumasi on January 22nd and reached Cape Coast eight

days later. Aggrey had been paid 7s. 6d. a day, which was more money than he had ever earned before. He seems not to have suffered at all. At the end of the campaign, he tells us, he "supplied a month's report from his note-book on the work of his department from Akwansirem to Kumasi and after, during which time the captain was incapacitated by illness."

It was about this time that the men of Kodwo Kwegyir's Company thought that his son should conform to tribal customs by joining them. But Teacher Aggrey had now all his mind and heart in the future; what had a child of the Revolution in common with things obsolescent? One evening, when he was returning alone to the Mission House, he was captured by young men and borne toward the Company's headquarters, where the initiation was customarily performed. But, his guardians relaxing their vigilance for a moment, he freed himself suddenly and escaped. Aggrey lived to adopt a different attitude towards the customs and institutions of his people.

The British Government has not on the Gold Coast, as in some parts of East Africa, assumed possession and control of the land; this remains, as it has always been, in the hands of the African inhabitants. Nor does the Government make any claim to rights over the minerals below the soil. The settlement of the country led to the coming of many Europeans in search of wealth. They prospected for minerals and since, wherever found, these were the property of the people, all who wished to exploit their discoveries were bound to treat with the Chiefs. The Chiefs were ready, for a consideration, to meet the desires of the prospectors and promoters of companies; so ready, in fact, that they would sell the same piece of land over and over again to different purchasers. There was very real danger that the people

would lose possession of their lands through this action of the Chiefs ; indeed, it is said that up to 1914 the Chiefs had actually signed away an area larger than the whole colony. Before that date a law had been passed limiting mining concessions and setting up a Court of Judges to approve or disallow all concessions. This court struck out many claims, but still half the area of the territory was alienated.

In 1897 the Government attempted to control the sale of land, the evil effects of which upon the people it clearly saw. The Public Lands Bill, however, aroused justifiable suspicions in the minds of Africans. They thought it would have the effect of making the Government the ultimate and paramount owner of all the unoccupied land in the colony. The Aborigines' Rights Protection Society was formed to combat this and any other similar proposal in the future.

Aggrey became recording secretary of the Society, and for a short time acted as chief secretary. He carried about a petition for signature against the Bill. On one occasion he performed the splendid achievement of walking, in the course of a single day, thirty-six miles to Mansu to send an important cable to London on behalf of the Society. His friend Anaman was now editor of the *Gold Coast Methodist Times* and an eager opponent of the Bill. Aggrey helped him to write articles against the obnoxious measure. The Bill was withdrawn.

Aggrey had become a competent printer by this time. The Wesleyan Mission had set up a press in 1895 and he had spent much of his spare time in learning the mysteries of the art. He often composed the type for Mr. Anaman's leading articles and was indeed one of the sub-editors of the *Methodist Times*.

Trusted by the leaders of the religious community and likely to be a minister himself ; so popular in Cape Coast that he could say " if I wore my hat over my right brow all the young men wore theirs in the same way " ; Head-master of the premier school in the town ; all this and more Aggrey had now become. Yet suddenly he threw

it all aside and left his relatives and friends to live among entire strangers.

In July, 1898, he sailed for the United States of America.

Part II

IN AMERICA

" On the Gold Coast I was so popular that if I wore my hat over my right brow all the young men wore theirs in the same way. I did not know then that I knew nothing. From the Gold Coast I went to America, where I obtained two doctorates. Then I perceived that I knew nothing."

" I tell the southern people of America, with whom I have lived for over twenty years, that they have a special contribution to make toward the solving of the race problem, and of the civilisation of Africa. They have lived side by side with us; they know our faith, our loyalty, our honesty, our sensitiveness; they know the things we prize the most; such knowledge should be used for the extension of God's Kingdom."

" Some white people ought to be transformed into Negroes just for a few days, so as to feel what we feel and suffer what we suffer."

" Some people took to war; we took to love; some people took to hate; we took to song; some people took to anger; we took to laughter; some people took to despair; we took to hope. ' Patrol is going to get you; the bloodhound is going to get you; you can't run as fast as the bloodhounds; what are you going to do, black man? ' In the darkest part of the night when everybody else might have despaired, we looked and we sang, long before our white brothers thought of an airplane, ' Swing Low, Sweet Chariot, coming for to carry me Home.' "

" Laughing is the way to go through life. It is the positive side of Christ's law of non-resistance."

" If I find a man scowling at me, I just smile back. He scowls again, and I smile. I don't often find anyone scowl a third time."

J. E. K. Aggrey.

CHAPTER V

STUDENT AND PROFESSOR AT LIVINGSTONE

WE do not know the reasons which led Aggrey to cross the Atlantic. He left no record of his motives. There are indications, however, that for a certain period he had been restless and perhaps dissatisfied. Whatever else may have contributed to this state of mind—and perhaps an unfortunate love affair helped—it is certain that he craved for more learning than the schools of the Gold Coast could afford. He seems to have turned his eyes first toward England. I am told that he also considered going to a college for training Africans at Colwyn Bay in Wales. Then there arrived on the Gold Coast a man who finally helped him to a decision. John Bryan Small, a native of Barbados and educated partly at Codrington College, had spent some time on the Gold Coast and had served as clerk to a British Brigade in Honduras before entering the United States, where he became a minister and subsequently a bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. As Bishop he revisited the Gold Coast with a view to establishing a Mission there. His plan was to induce several young men to go to America for training and then to return in the service of the Mission. Aggrey and his closest friend were given the opportunity, but refused it. The offer was renewed ; Mr. Anaman urged Aggrey to accept it ; other friends pressed money upon him ; and on July 10th, 1898, he sailed in s.s. *Accra* for England and thence to America.

After spending a few weeks in Bishop Small's house at York, Pennsylvania, he made his way to Salisbury, a beautiful little city in North Carolina, where Livingstone

College, the chief educational institution of the Methodist Zion Church, is situated.

The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, with which for the next twenty years Aggrey was closely connected, is one of the largest of the seventeen Methodist sects which flourish in the United States. It sprang from a congregation in New York City which separated in about 1820 from the Methodist Episcopal Church on account of the unchristian treatment which, the Negroes alleged, they received from the white members. "On the whole," writes the Methodist historian, "this allegation is undoubtedly true."

At the close of the Civil War strenuous efforts were made by their northern friends to educate the emancipated slaves. Colleges and schools were built in the South and the almost entirely illiterate freedmen began painfully to climb the educational ladder. After a time the Negroes became persuaded that they must depend more largely upon their own efforts. A Conference of ministers of the Zion Church having resolved to establish a college, the first session of what was named Zion Wesley Institute was held in a single room of a coloured minister's parsonage at Concord, N.C. The college was more definitely organised in 1882. In that year, Dr. J. C. Price, a young Negro of brilliant talent, returned from the Ecumenical Methodist Conference in London, where, although he had graduated at Lincoln University only a year before, he represented his denomination, and amazed the assembly by his eloquence. He brought with him ten thousand dollars which he had collected for the college, and was appointed its Principal. The white citizens of Salisbury offered a thousand dollars if the college could be moved to their city, and there forty acres of land were acquired, and the buildings were erected—the students digging the clay and making the bricks.

During the Civil War a large Confederate prison camp was placed outside Salisbury, and among the prisoners who died there was the nineteen-year-old son of David Livingstone, Robert, who under an assumed name had

enlisted in the Federal Army.* This fact, and the reverence with which the great Friend of Africa was and is still held by American Negroes, led to the college being named Livingstone College.

Dr. Price won the respect of the white citizens of Salisbury. He proved, as in later years Aggrey proved, that in the South a man need not be white to win recognition as a man of worth. He agreed with some other Negro leaders in advocating an education which included the culture of the head, the hand, and the heart; but industrial training was not introduced into the college until later, and it never received serious attention. In 1898 the college was divided into a grammar school, for thorough training in rudiments of English, and normal and classical departments. The Hood Theological Seminary was also part of the college. The students, male and female, numbered about 200. The President was the Rev. W. H. Goler, D.D., who had succeeded Dr. Price in 1894.

Aggrey came better prepared than the majority of the students. There was no need for him to pass through elementary classes: he was put at once into the classical department. In view of the development of his ideas about education it is interesting to note the subjects he studied. In the first term of his Freshman year he took Greek (Xenophon's *Anabasis*), and Latin (Cicero, Virgil, and prose composition), English (composition, rhetoric, Shakespeare, history, elocution), geometry and physical geography. In the second term, the class read Homer's *Iliad*, book I, and Virgil's *Aeneid*, and continued the other subjects. In the first term of the Sophomore year, they read the second and third books of the *Iliad*, and Livy,

* Blaikie writes that Robert died in hospital in Salisbury, and that he was buried in the great national cemetery at Gettysburg in Pennsylvania (*David Livingstone*, pp. 286, 293). There is a tradition at Salisbury that his body lies, with 12,000 others, in the national cemetery there, and that he was buried under the name of R. Vincent, who appears on the official record as "private, third New Hampshire Regiment, Co.H., serial No. 3263, died from gunshot wound, Dec. 5th, 1864, in a prison camp near Salisbury."

book XXI. In English they had Parliamentary Practice, Argumentation and Debating, and a critical study of Shakespeare, Milton, Tennyson, and Browning. Trigonometry was added, with ancient history, German, and zoology. In the second term they read the *Odyssey* and selections from Herodotus, Livy, book XXII, and Cicero's *de Senectute*. They went on with trigonometry and argumentation and studied the poets of the Restoration and the eighteenth century.

In the first term of the Junior year, the class went on to Demosthenes in Greek and Horace in Latin; they studied the poets of the nineteenth century; began astronomy, logic, modern history, surveying, and navigation; and continued German. In the second term they took up Plato's *Apology* and *Phædo* and went on with Horace. They also embarked upon studies in Comparative Literature, chemistry and analytic geometry. Modern history still held their attention.

In the first term of the Senior year, they read Æschylus and Tacitus, and entered upon mental philosophy and sociology and geology. In the second term they continued their study of Æschylus, began Juvenal's *Satires*, and moral philosophy, Christian evidences, biology, economics and political economy.

Thirty years ago Africans were not so well known as now to their congeners, the American Negroes. The latter, not unnaturally, were inclined to regard all Africans as uncivilised—as mere savages. The coming of young men like Aggrey, intelligent and in some instances better educated than their own novices, went far to remove this impression. Aggrey, I am told, was quickly recognised to be a gentlemanly fellow and became extremely popular with his fellow-students. Dr. Goler looked upon him as a model student—keen, studious, well-behaved. He set a fine example and before long was exerting a healthy influence throughout the college. He was no athlete and took no part in the games. But he joined heartily in the cheering. Old students still recall his inspiring shout: "Play ball, play ball, boys."

Students in Negro colleges, coming mainly from poor homes, are compelled to earn their fees. The strenuous efforts which they cheerfully make to pay their way excites one's admiration. During the sessions they find ways of picking up cash, and the vacations are spent in labour of one sort and another, mostly of a menial kind. Aggrey was no exception. He brought with him funds sufficient for the first term ; then when the long vacation arrived, lasting from the end of May till the beginning of October, he, like the rest, turned out to work. Fortunately for himself he had some skill as a compositor and found employment in the publishing house of the Zion Church at Charlotte. " When I asked for work," said Aggrey, " they told me they had no work except for a devil. I began to black my face more black, as it is easy to do when you are using those hand machines. In three weeks I was moved on to be a journeyman and in another three weeks I was made a proof reader." He came into contact with the editors of the *Charlotte Daily Observer*—Messrs. J. P. Caldwell and I. I. Avery—who invited him to contribute occasional articles to their paper, which is one of the most influential and representative daily papers printed in the Southern States. Mr. H. E. C. Bryant, through whose hands Aggrey's contributions passed, said of him : " He's dark as dark, but very few in America can use English as he can. His articles go in without any blue-pencilling."

Aggrey graduated B.A. in 1902 with honours at the head of his class, in which were men and women who have achieved fine success in various fields. He won a gold medal for English composition, and a second gold medal for general scholarship and deportment. In the same year he delivered a Latin salutatory at Commencement—which in American colleges is the close of the term. He had already distinguished himself by delivering the first Greek oration ever heard in the college. In 1912 the degree of A.M. was conferred upon him by Livingstone College, and Hood Theological Seminary made him D.D.

Having now finished his college course in America, Aggrey was faced with the question of returning to the Gold Coast in accordance with the understanding with Bishop Small. Was he to become a missionary in his own country or was he to continue at Livingstone College? He would in any case be serving the Zion Church. What actually determined his choice we do not know, but I gather that the college authorities pressed him to stay. Bishop Small was naturally disappointed and for some time was estranged from Aggrey. Another Gold Coast student, Osam Pinanko, who graduated a year later, went back as a minister of the Zion Church and Aggrey remained at the college. Looking back now, we cannot but conclude that the decision was a right one.

For some time before graduating Aggrey had given assistance to the staff of the College. During his last year one of the professors, A. B. Johnson, fell ill and Aggrey did his work for him: and when Mr. Johnson died Aggrey was appointed Registrar and Financial Secretary. He also took classes in English language and literature, sociology and economics. At various times during the following years he was instructor in New Testament Greek and exegesis, and lecturer in Christian sociology and economics, in Hood Theological Seminary.

As a teacher he gained a great reputation. His friend and colleague, Professor Hannum, says, "He proved to be an inspirational man." He knew how to draw the best out of men. He made them believe they could accomplish something. He threw himself heartily into every phase of college life. For some years he acted as treasurer of the college athletic association, his colleague Hannum being secretary. Out of his limited financial resources he assisted them liberally. In his office as Registrar and Financial Secretary it fell to him to receive the students' fees and so was brought into intimate touch with the conditions of the men. He was not a mere official, but took a deep interest in them. He preached the doctrine of self-reliance. Years afterwards when relating his experiences of this period, he said: "I did not allow any

father to pay for his boy. Everyone should work for himself. I did it, and they could do it. It is a shame for anyone to call upon his widowed mother." He helped them to get work. At the same time if a student was willing to pay, but unable at the moment to find his fees, he found a friend in the Registrar. Aggrey never had much money, but was always ready to help a deserving and necessitous student.

He worked hard and expected the students to follow his example. At eight o'clock he would be out to call the roll. He was a stickler for punctuality. Students used to accuse him of putting on the clock. They tried to catch him late, but never succeeded. Prayers followed and then classes all day. In the evening he conducted prayers again. His days were full and he was always accessible to the students. His learning impressed them and still more the fact that he was always ready to impart it.

Under Aggrey's inspiration his colleague Hannum organised an orchestra of the students which won some fame in the city. When the owner of a theatre invited them to perform, Mr. Hannum was reluctant because he knew the prejudice against Negroes. The city aristocracy undertook that there should be no trouble and on the night packed the best seats and led the applause. For three years the orchestra continued to play in the theatre.

I suggested in a previous chapter that Aggrey was not a musician. But he loved music and possessed excellent taste. In one of his letters there is a passage which shows his dislike for rag-time. He is writing about one of the instructors in music.

> "Two weeks ago [she] actually accompanied a very raggedy rag in the society for the Garrison [one of the College literary societies]. And the next day even down-town people told me of it and said they knew I would have stopped it if I had been there. For a whole week, and since, I made a hot crusade about rag-time music in my literature classes and in open chapel before all. I then took the lady to task. Told her I hated rag music, that if I were away and returned and heard people playing rags on my piano at home

with Mrs. Aggrey's permission (a thing impossible, for she hates it as I) I would give my piano a present to somebody —and I meant that. I told her if she played a *bad* rag in chapel and I were leading I would stop the march right in the middle of the playing."

He was superintendent of the College Sunday school. The Easter Sunday demonstrations which he organised became famous in the city. The white congregations would close their services early in the evening so that they could go to Livingstone College to hear the students sing.

He started vespers in the college chapel on Sunday, giving a series of extempore addresses on topical and popular subjects. In these addresses, none of which unfortunately is extant, he held up high ideals before the students.

In short it was a strenuous life. The students responded to his interest in them—they would have done anything for him. Dr. W. J. Trent, the present Principal, who was a fellow-student, writes of him : " His influence at Livingstone, where he taught for more than twenty years, was very precious and had a great deal to do with the improvement of the moral and spiritual conditions of the whole college life."

ALTHOUGH it be to anticipate, it is convenient to refer here to Aggrey's future in one respect.

Because Aggrey was an African he the more easily won the regard of many white Americans who looked down upon Negroes ; but the fact of being an African made it harder to get on with some of the American Negroes. He gained the respect and ardent affection of numbers of these, but in the minds of not a few the old prejudice persisted. When in 1917 a vacancy occurred in the Presidency of Livingstone College a strong section of the Zion Church, some of his colleagues on the staff, and all the students, were strongly in favour of Aggrey being ap-

pointed, and Aggrey was ambitious for the position ; but mainly on the ground, it seems, that he was an African he was passed over. Aggrey's letters at the time reveal his disappointment, but he loyally supported the new President.

" I believe," he wrote later, " the Lord must have had something else in store for me. Hence I have been doing my best, patiently waiting until He gets ready for me to go elsewhere : where He leads I'll follow."

When the next vacancy occurred, in 1924, Aggrey's name was again suggested. By that time he was in Africa on the Education Commission. One of his fellow-commissioners, Dr. Dillard, came to Aggrey after he had made one of his great speeches and said, "Aggrey, I have come to the conclusion that the South cannot spare you. Won't you accept the Presidency of Livingstone College ? " But Aggrey was now bent on another course. The official invitation to join the staff of Achimota College was then on the way, if it had not already reached him. "Africa calls, and the call appeals to me very strongly," he wrote. Early in the following year, after he had been some months at Achimota, he entered the office of Sir Gordon Guggisberg, the Governor of the Gold Coast. " Well, Aggrey," said Sir Gordon, with a smile of welcome, " what's the trouble this morning ? " " No trouble, sir," replied Aggrey. " I want you kindly to read this." Sir Gordon's heart sank as he read the letter, which was from the authorities formally inviting Aggrey to the Presidency of Livingstone College and naming a salary larger than he was actually receiving. The new College could not spare its most popular officer, as Sir Gordon well knew. " This is a bad business, Aggrey," he began, and then stopped as Aggrey brought out another paper. " Before you say anything, will your Excellency read this ? " he said. It was the copy of a letter, already posted, declining the offer. Aggrey had elected to stand by his own people. " In the United States Livingstone stands first in my heart," he wrote to a friend. " I love her. God's choicest blessings attend

her. But in the whole wide world Africa, my Africa, comes first."

There was a time, so American Negroes have assured me, when Aggrey might have been a Bishop of the Zion Methodist Church had his aspirations risen in that direction.

CHAPTER VI

HOME LIFE

THE year 1904 was a fateful one for Aggrey. He then met his future wife, and made the acquaintance of the man who more than any other influenced his future career.

In April he was invited to be best man at the wedding of his friend, W. J. Trent, who subsequently became President of Livingstone College. The bride had made a covenant with her school friend, Rosebud Rudolf Douglass, that the first to be married should have the other as her bridesmaid. Miss Douglass was therefore in attendance when Aggrey arrived for the wedding at Raleigh. Years afterwards he confided to a friend that as soon as he saw her he said to himself, " That's the girl for me." At breakfast before the ceremony, when he and five others were at table, he committed a *faux pas* which for a time lowered him in the lady's eyes. For, wishing to be pleasant, he said : " Wouldn't it be interesting if in three years' time we should be Mr. and Mrs. Trent, Dr. and Mrs. Walker, and Mr. and Mrs. Aggrey ? " Miss Douglass was gravely offended by this jocosity and would hardly speak a word to him. Yet she felt attracted by the personality and brilliant conversation of the African guest. Next morning, Dr. Walker and his fiancée went off together and Aggrey asked Miss Douglass to take a walk with him. Though still vexed she could not refuse. They visited a School for the Blind, and saw pupils pricking off an English lesson on paper. Holding one sheet up to the light they could read the words, " Her voice was ever soft, gentle and low." " Do you recognise the quotation ? " said Aggrey, and Miss Douglass

promptly replied : " King Lear, of course." They fell to discussing Cordelia and Shakespeare in general, and other literary subjects, discovering a common taste. At the end of that day Miss Douglass thought him the most wonderful man she had ever met. They parted, she to return to her home at Portsmouth in Virginia, and he to Salisbury.

Aggrey's desire for learning was unquenchable. That summer he attended classes at Columbia University, New York. According to the official records his work in French was excellent, in German poor, and no marks were awarded him in philosophy.

He wrote Miss Douglass about his work and at the close of the summer school proposed to call at Portsmouth on the way back to Salisbury. She arranged for him to stay with Dr. France, a native of the Gold Coast who was practising as a physician in the town, and was married to a friend of hers. The acquaintance thus brought about developed into a close friendship which endured until Dr. France's death. Aggrey was introduced to Miss Douglass's parents and friends, who were greatly taken with him.

In November a Convention of the Coloured Y.M.C.A. was held at Portsmouth and Aggrey attended as a representative of his College. It was there he first met Dr. Jesse Jones, about whom a word or two must be said here.

Welsh by birth, he had migrated with his parents to the United States in 1884. His boyhood was spent in an Ohio town of miners and iron workers, where he acquired an early sympathy with the labouring class. He intended at one time to be a doctor, but religion entered into his life and he began to study for the ministry. After passing through Washington and Lee University and Marietta College, he entered the Union Theological Seminary in New York, where he graduated B.D. It was the sociological side of religion that interested him most. He attended classes at Columbia University where, as he says, " the virile-minded Giddings guided and inspired

all to a scientific approach to human society." For five years he regularly devoted his week-ends under the auspices of a Church Federation to regular visitation of New York tenements densely populated by Jews and Italians. He sought eagerly to know how they lived. He studied them at work and play and worship. At the close of his survey, he made it the subject of his dissertation for the Ph.D. degree at Columbia. In the intervals of his college career Dr. Jones had been headmaster of a school for three years : these experiences in New York led him to reconsider the problems of education. While he was pondering this weighty matter, the suggestion was made to him that he should join the staff of Hampton Institute as associate chaplain and also take charge of the Research department. A ten hours' railway journey transported him into a world that was new to him—a world in which black and white confronted each other. There at Hampton, after the Civil War, General Armstrong had founded the Institute the fame of which has since gone round the world. Armstrong's purpose was to bring life, more abundant life, to the emancipated Negroes. He regarded instruction in industry and agriculture, in literary appreciation and the classics, in science and philosophy, as all equally educational, provided the primary aim was to make life rather than to make a living. He taught the unity of life, and insisted upon a recognition of the spiritual content of the simplest task. Religion, for General Armstrong, was a great principle that should permeate and colour every activity. He was followed by Dr. Frissell, a man of rare spirit, who spoke and worked and prayed for the Kingdom of God. These men, and their pupils, Booker Washington and Robert R. Moton, embodied ideals of effective education and genuine co-operation of the races.

Here was the very idea of education that Dr. Jesse Jones had been groping after, and in the years to come he was destined to develop, expound and propagate it, not only in America but in Africa.

Dr. Jones had also received an invitation to attend the Convention at Portsmouth. He gave an address on the relation of religion to the life of the community. This impressed Aggrey, who sought an interview with him. Thus began a friendship that was to prove exceedingly fruitful in the years to come.

Dr. Jones was so greatly taken with Aggrey, that he invited him to preach at Hampton on the following Sunday. Dr. R. R. Moton, who is now Principal of the Tuskegee Institute, was then Commandant at Hampton. He was anxious to maintain a very high level in the Institute services, which were attended by the white teachers and their families, as well as by the large number of Negro and Amerindian students. He was taken aback when he heard that Dr. Jones had invited an unknown African to preach. The time for the service arrived ; the students paraded, were duly inspected, and marched into the auditorium. Dr. Moton sat in his place, severely critical. In due course Aggrey announced his text : " It is a good thing to show forth thy loving-kindness upon an instrument of ten strings " (Ps. xcii, 1-3). Dr. Moton doubted more than ever ; what could a man say on such a text beyond the irrelevant rhapsodies indulged in by certain grandiloquent preachers ? Aggrey went on to liken human virtues to the major and minor chords of great music. As he developed his theme, the Commandant's apprehensions evaporated ; he saw that he was in the presence of a great preacher ; and afterwards he was wont to declare, as he repeated to me, that this was one of the three outstanding sermons which he heard during his thirty-five years at Hampton.

The service marked one of the turning-points in Aggrey's life. That day he emerged from the comparative obscurity of Livingstone College. He had demonstrated his powers of persuasive eloquence in

the presence of outstanding leaders and friends of his race.

Miss Douglass had accompanied Aggrey to Hampton. They returned together by the steamer to Portsmouth, she stirred with emotions excited by that great discourse. He told her of his studies at Columbia and mentioned the suggestion made to him that he should engage in some anthropological research in Africa for the university. "How would you like to go to help me with the anthropology?" he asked her. This was in effect an offer of marriage, but the maiden was not to be won so easily. "I know nothing of anthropology"—so she fenced. "Well," said he, "anthropology is the science of man; you would not need to know the science in general; you would have to do with one man only." This was vague, but his meaning could not be misunderstood. They got no further, however, that day.

On Aggrey's return to Salisbury he kept up a correspondence with Miss Douglass. In the spring of 1905 he invited her to Salisbury and she went with the assurance that she was to see her future home. During this visit it was agreed that they should be married in the following November.

The wedding took place on November 8th at Portsmouth, and next day Mr. and Mrs. Aggrey travelled to Salisbury. The College provides no dwellings for the professors and for the first three months the young couple found a home with Mrs. Price, the widow of the first Principal. In 1912, after renting a house for seven years, Aggrey built a charming residence on a site opposite to the main entrance to the College.

The marriage was a happy one. In some respects the temperaments of Aggrey and his wife were complementary. They had many tastes in common—among them a love for all beautiful things in art and literature.

Aggrey's childhood had been spent where women were not given their place as the equals of men. Even well-educated men on the Gold Coast expected their wives to wait on them as they sat at table—and to eat their own

meals in the kitchen. The different state of affairs which he witnessed in the Mission House at Cape Coast impressed him deeply. One day, he always remembered, Mr. Dennis Kemp rashly set out to cross from the house to the workshops without wearing his sun-helmet, and was peremptorily ordered back by Mrs. Kemp. The great man's submissiveness to his wife astonished the boy. On another occasion the mistress of the house desired to change the position of a rather heavy piece of furniture. Mr. Kemp beckoned to Aggrey to lend him a hand, which of course he willingly did, but his surprise was great that the work should be done by men, while the woman looked on and gave directions. All through the years he spent in the Mission House he quietly observed the relations between the missionary and his wife. They were something new to him, but his conscience approved them and he resolved that if ever he married he would treat his wife in the same way. Enough of the old Adam remained in him to make the first year of their married life somewhat of an anxiety to Mrs. Aggrey, but being a sensible woman, she saw the way to manage him and very soon they settled down into a companionship that in most respects was ideal.

Within five years of the marriage three children were born to them. The first a girl, in January, 1907. They wished to perpetuate in her name some remembrance of their romance, so since Mrs. Aggrey's bridesmaid had carried at the wedding an azalea plant in full bloom, tied in ribbons, they, on Aggrey's suggestion, named her Abna Azalea—the first name being his mother's. The second child, a boy, born in July, 1908, was named Kwegyir after Aggrey's father ; and the third, a girl born in July, 1910, was given her mother's name, Rosebud. Sixteen years later the last of their children arrived (July 24th, 1926) and was named Orison Rudolf Guggisberg.

Aggrey believed implicitly in the possibility of influencing an unborn child through its mother. He took care that his wife should be surrounded with beautiful pictures. He regularly read the Odes and Epistles of Horace

1. DR. AGGREY AND A YOUNG ENGLISH FRIEND
Photo by H. W. Peet

2. MISS ABNA AGGREY AND ORISON

3. DR. AGGREY AND THE REV. A. G. FRASER
Photo by Miss R. M. Cobb

(in the original) with her before the birth of Abna. Again when the second child was expected he taught her French, and when the third was coming he engaged a music teacher to give his wife lessons. He was convinced that this education was effective. At the time of writing this biography, Abna is studying for her B.A. at Shaw University, Kwegyir (who strikingly resembles his father) is working for a degree at Oberlin College, and Rosebud is at Hampton Institute.

The home at Salisbury was a delightful one. It was my pleasure to visit it in September, 1928. Aggrey himself seemed to be not far away. Mrs. Aggrey was an ideal hostess, refined, considerate, kind. The daughters I found to be very charming girls, quick, intelligent, laughter-loving, while the baby was a sheer delight. Kwegyir I did not see—he was absent, following his father's good example by working during his vacation to earn his college-fees.

It was altogether a happy home in the early days while their father was there. The children idolised him. The house rang with merry laughter. Aggrey was an extremely busy man and as the years grew so his labours increased. People passing the house in the early hours of the morning would see a light in the room, where, surrounded by his books, Aggrey was reading and writing. But he was never too busy to give time to his family. He was always ready to discuss a literary topic with his wife —would pour out poetry as she sat sewing, and would quote Greek and Latin by the yard. Throughout their lives together they enjoyed a delightful literary companionship. During one season they would be engrossed in French or Latin, or Greek ; at another he would teach her logic, philosophy or physiology. She used to twit him with neglecting the logic lessons for fear she should learn to outwit him in argument. In her turn Mrs. Aggrey tried, but with little success, to initiate him into the science of the kitchen. For the children there were fun and games, as well as serious instruction. Family worship was regularly held in the household. The children liked to

tease their father. They knew his abhorrence of red; sometimes they would surreptitiously take the white handkerchief from his pocket and replace it with a red one, and would watch with delight his evident dismay when he pulled it out in the middle of his sermon. If ever he showed rare signs of irritation, they would hum or sing: "Crown Him with many crowns, The Lamb upon His throne," and immediately cheerfulness would return.

The students from the College were frequent and welcome visitors in that hospitable home. The family life they saw there excited their wonder and admiration. The girl students often said if ever they married they wished for husbands like Professor Aggrey.

In his later years, when Aggrey was absent from home for prolonged periods, he wrote long letters to his wife and children. To be away from them was a sore trial to his fatherly heart. "I love my family," he wrote to Abna, "this is the price one has to pay for marrying what you often name Miss Humanity." He rejoiced in their successes, showed keen interest in their studies, expressed his pride in them and urged them on to greater things. All his affectionate nature stands revealed in these charming letters, from which, with the children's permission, some extracts are quoted here.

A week before his death Aggrey wrote thus in a letter to his son, Kwegyir:

To KWEGYIR AGGREY. New York.
July 23rd, 1927.

My dear Kweg.,

. . . I was certainly disappointed in not meeting you at home when I got there. Your mother met me at the station. After greetings my first question was "Where is Kweg?" She told me you were up north at a camp working. I was painfully hurt "inside." I had visualised the talks we were going to have together. I wanted to take time to hear all of your plans, and we would talk them over.

I got your letter and I have tried to see things from your point of view. I know the effect of teasing on a boy of your age—others telling you you don't like work. We of the

house know that is not true of you. You do like to work. I have talked about you on several occasions in Africa—your shoe-shining, your brick-laying, and last year I understand you worked in the Ice Factory. You are no lazy boy, not a bit. Even before you were grown enough to do much, you used to help me in getting in wood, in sweeping and cleaning around, in cutting the hedge, in cleaning and pressing clothes, in going errands, and with your bottle of peroxide or hydroxide ready to minister to any wounded in the house. That's how we came to the idea you wanted to be a physician. And while in Hampton you used to work on some afternoons—I think it was Thursdays. Your mother and mother's folk all work—no lazy ones, and on my side . . . we all work, and they say " work " is my middle name. I worked my way through Livingstone. There is not a lazy bone in your system or anatomy. But others may not know and they would guy or tease or try to taunt you, and of course you would like to *show* them that you are not afraid of work, you are not averse to working. This is commendable, Kweg.

But far above this spirit to show your fellows that you are not a lazy loon is the other. You had given your word. You did not have to sign a contract. Your grandfather Kwegyir never would sign a contract. He would always say, " My word is my bond," and he who could trace his lineage unbroken to 1076 and then beyond to the civilisation that made Egyptian culture possible was too proud to break his promise. I was at Wall Street yesterday and I had occasion to tell some white persons there of the " Aggrey tradition " and an Aggrey's word. My eyes filled with tears of pride as I took out your letter and read that part which tells of your not having to sign a contract, and sticking to your promise, and an Aggrey's word. This is noble, this is excellent. I am very proud of you. I see your viewpoint. I see the aristocracy of several centuries welling up in you. You come from no mean line or lines, whichever way you trace your lineage. And I am also gratified that you do not give your word without due previous consideration. Be careful with your word always, ever, all the time. If hastily you give your word to take part in anything that you later become convinced would be wrong, in that instance you are at liberty, nay you are morally bound, to break that promise.

It is never right to do wrong. I am sure you know that. Secondly, if you have given your word of honour, say for instance to take a pleasure trip, but just on the eve of that trip your mother falls seriously ill, or some grave exigencies arise, you are at liberty to postpone the trip or even cancel it, for a greater good takes precedence over a less or lesser good. But in ordinary cases when after humble prayer and careful consideration you give your word of honour—stick to it, my boy, stick to it. An Aggrey's word is his bond.

To Abna Aggrey. Achimota College.
Jan. (?) 1926.

And A.—the lowest mark you have made. Good! It seems you are destined to revel in A's. You have all the A's in your names: *A*bna, *A*ndua, *A*zalea, *A*ggrey. Only the best is good enough for an Aggrey. I am really proud of you, my Abna. . . . I want you to write me down every kind of trick the baby performs. I am very, very, very, interested to know every little detail. They think it may not interest me to know, but it is very interesting. Your mother won't tell me much. She thinks I am only interested in big stuff and big doings, but I get tired of big stuff all the time and big doings. I want to hear of Orison. . . . No man on earth loves his home, his wife and children more than I, and none knows, not one of you knows, the lonely hours I spend at nights by myself and longing to see you and hear you. . . . Continue to pray the prayer you used to pray when you were a baby: "God bless papa and mama, Kwegyir and me and everybody. Give papa some money, Amen." You may add Rosebud and Rudolf, but don't forget, "Give papa some money, Amen."

And such letters would be answered in a way to pull at a father's heart-strings. For the child was born in his absence and he had not yet seen him.

From Abna Aggrey. Salisbury, N.C.
March 25th, 1927.

Rudolf is a strong, fat, mischievous, spoiled, beautiful boy. He is a lump of lead but insists on being carried and played with. And, Papa, you'd die laughing to hear him fuss. Of course he doesn't talk—only "Hey" and a few nouns and verbs from the Goo-Goo language. But he lets you know by his mumbling whether or not he is satisfied.

If you were at home he would pull all your ties out. *You* would have to dance with him. Every day Mama and Miss Roxie take him to your big picture and say "See Papa? Tell Papa good morning," etc. Sometimes he will say "Hey," but again he will try to butt you—so beware.

Aggrey cherished hopes that his children, when grown up, would join him in Africa and carry on his work to nobler issues. "I wish I had twelve boys and twelve girls," he wrote his friend Patterson. "I'd need every one of them in this great task."

Aggrey was a lover-husband to the end. Were it not a sacrilege I should like to quote extensively from the letters which Mrs. Aggrey has confided to me, many of them written while he was touring America. He poured out his heart in these letters, telling her joyously of his oratorical triumphs, of his meeting distinguished people, of the things that were said to him—wishing that she were there to share with him. "Every honor I lay at your feet, Rose," he would write. "I thank God and you."

Wherever he went he talked of his wife, in a frank, disarming way—he would often talk of her when she was present, much to her embarrassment.

At least once he made effective use of an incident in their married life. It was at a college in South Africa where the students had gone on strike and the teachers were divided into groups—altogether a distressful situation. Aggrey was asked to say a healing word. He appealed for reconciliation and mutual forgiveness.

They tell me (he wrote to his wife) that the most telling illustration I gave that night was the one I gave about you, yes, about *you*. Please don't get excited! Because it went home, and has done wonders. I told them how once at a meal you and sister and I were eating when I said something that hurt your feelings. I knew it, but I was too proud to apologise right then. At night in my room, the middle room, I decided that the manly thing was to apologise. Then the coward in me [said], "Slip into her room, wake her up and apologise." But the giant said, "No, you hurt her feelings

before her sister and at a meal, go back there as Jesus told the disciples to do—to Jerusalem where Peter had lied, and John had followed afar off, and James had run away, right there to Jerusalem and witness." All night long I wrestled with myself, until by God's help I downed him. So at breakfast, you remember, before sister, I apologised unconditionally—you were touched, sister wept, to see me do what was thought impossible with me. Since then I have not found it hard to apologise. I downed myself . . . I just can't tell you all of it. But I saw men looking at their wives and wives looking at their husbands. One white teacher, lady teacher, came and shook my hand and told me to pray for her. She went and made [it] up, the ice was broken, and others followed suit, and now the groups are broken and they are working together.

To what degree did Aggrey's happy home life and manifold labours put Africa out of his mind? Twenty years is a long time to be absent from home. As it recedes in memory it takes on the colours of illusionment. The harshness of its outlines is effaced, all its fairness is enhanced. New interests absorb one's attention, and it becomes more and more difficult to break away from them to return to the stage where earlier parts were played. That Aggrey came to see his native land through a glamorous mist cannot, I think, be doubted, but his determination to return thither, somehow, somewhen, grew rather than faded with the passing of the years. " From the very jump, as we drove about together in the county of Rowan, Aggrey's dream was of Africa," says Mr. Patterson, of whose association with Aggrey the following chapter will tell. " He talked to me constantly about it and of his desire to go back. He would be able, he said, to find his way again to every place that he had known, and know all about it. His first love was Africa—his whole thought was for Africa. From his talks I came to know it as if I had lived there."

He kept up an intermittent correspondence with friends and relatives on the Gold Coast.

Once, at least, came a letter from "Amonoo V, King of Anamabu," congratulating Aggrey on the honours he was winning for his father's town and people.

John M. Sarbah, son of Kodwo Kwegyir's employer, who, after a distinguished academic career in England, was now back on the Gold Coast, wrote frequently—I have a number of his letters dated 1910, the year of his death. It seems that Aggrey was then cherishing the ambition of graduating at London University: and Sarbah sent him £10 10s. towards the expenses. This cheque was found among Aggrey's papers; he never cashed it. "Your mission," he wrote, "is to let the world know once for all that as Philip Macoe was the first [African] graduate of Oxford, so in London you will be *the* man and both of you are Mfantsifu [i.e. Fantis]. That is the object; concentrate your mind and all your powers to it." Mr. Sarbah was an ardent Nationalist. He kept Aggrey informed as to the doings of the Aborigines Protection Society, of the Native Press, and the progress of the Mfantsipim * school which was supported by the National Education Fund, of which Sarbah was a Trustee.

Few letters addressed by Aggrey to his family on the Gold Coast have come into my hands. While his brother Awir lived he sent money regularly through him to their mother, but after his death letters seem to have ceased for a time. They were renewed when his sister Abonyiwa's sons, Kwesi Ahin and Kwesi Fynn, were able to write—the elders being all illiterate. Aggrey encouraged these lads in their studies and told them about himself. "Your uncle," he wrote, "has never forgotten that he is a pure-blooded African, and he is certainly proud of his native country, his dear and beloved native country—

* The name means "A thousand Fantis." The school came later into the hands of the Wesleyans.

"Where Afric's sunny fountains
Roll down on golden sand;
Where every prospect pleases,
And man is not so vile."

In this letter there is a passage about his mother.

I say you write most interestingly, but no part of your letter touched me as deeply as that which referred to the prayer offered by my own dear mother that God may spare my life and pour morning blessings on me, my wife and children. Tell her, I thank her a thousand times, and I too am praying that the good Lord may continue to spare her life so I may see her once more before she goes the way of all the earth. Tell her not to weep. Her prayers have reached me; I feel them even now. Whenever I preach or deliver an oration that causes a favourable comment I remember my father was a Kyiame—a Linguist—and my mother an Anona, and all the Anonas are eloquent. . . . So now, I want to know two things about my mother. First, I want to find how much a month will keep her up comfortably. Tell me what all the rest are doing for her. I want her to have plenty to eat and nice things to wear and a comfortable home. Next, I want you to see after a decent house and find out the prices. I would have bought one for her long ago if I could have heard from some of my relatives regularly. Let me know how many of my nephews and nieces are intellectually strong. Tell me how far they have gone in their studies—each of them. I do not want to help the boys [only], I want to inspire the girls also. Are you the one or not who has already passed 3rd, 2nd, and 1st class College of Preceptors? I want to give one or two professions—law, medicine, dentistry, scientific agriculture, or commercial science. I see you prefer 'law.' If you do, I want you to start saving your money. Let me see what you can do yourself—you know the French adage says, *Aide-toi, le ciel t'aidera*, Heaven helps those who help themselves. You make a start and I will back you. . . .

CHAPTER VII

"LITTLE OF EVERYTHING"

IN October, 1908, Aggrey wrote to his friend Holland: "I am so busy—very busy doing little of everything."

That *little* of everything was an understatement. The years of his professorship at Livingstone College, from 1902 to 1920, were full years. With characteristic energy he threw himself into manifold activities. "I teach directly every day," he wrote, "second and third and fourth year Normal, Freshman, Sophomore and Junior classes. Touch more classes than anybody else." He succeeded in raising the college curriculum to a higher standard in English literature, which was one of his subjects. At one time he was directing a four-years' course of novel-reading. In addition to this teaching he performed the duties of Registrar and Financial Secretary, and as such was responsible for the college accounts.

But his labours extended beyond the college.

At one period he conducted, as an extra without fee or reward, classes for the Negro teachers of Rowan county.

He continued to write for *The Charlotte Observer*, and once at least dropped into poetry by contributing a translation of a French poem, 'L'Amitie," by Eugene De Loulay.

FRIENDSHIP

Everything that God does
  Has its portion of sun:
Every thorn has its rose,
  Every sad night its dawn.

For the meadow there's hay,
For the field the harvest;
For the air, th'eagle gay;
Gives the bush for the nest.

The tree has its verdure,
Every bee its honey,
Rolling wave, its murmur,
Every low tomb, a sky.

In this world, where all lower
To some higher point tend,
For the branch there's the flower,
And for the heart—the friend.

For a number of years a paper was published fortnightly during the sessions, and monthly during the Vacation, in the interest of the industrial department of Livingstone College. Dr. J. C. Moore, the industrial superintendent, was editor and Aggrey associate editor and business manager. It circulated among Negroes and the white folk who subscribed to the college.

Aggrey was an enthusiastic Mason—"I am proud to be one of the grand army of Master Masons," he said. One of the few Africans who could claim to be "a 33 degree Mason," he was also a Noble of the Mystic Shrine. In 1920 he was Worshipful Master of Calvary Lodge 581 of North Carolina, and a contributing Editor of *The Masonic Quarterly Review*, published in New York. In one of the numbers of that journal I find a "Grand Eulogy" delivered by him on 155 deceased members of the Lodge. This is an excellent example of the flowery rhetoric of which he was capable at this period of his life. A paragraph or two may well be quoted here:

> "One hundred and fifty-five times did a shaft from the bow of the insatiate archer—Death—strike down each time a stalwart soldier from our ranks. They came—these 155 men—from all parts of the Old North State—our Carolina; Carolina that bathes her beautiful dimpled feet in the early morning rays of the eastern sun, mingled in the azure of the mighty Atlantic, and pillows her poetic head in the bosom

of the Blue Ridge Mountains around whose brow scintillating stars vie with lightning-domiciled clouds to chant a Te Deum; Carolina, whose strong left arm encircles the waist of proud Tennessee, and shakes with her right the aristocratic hand of the Palmetto State, while her piercing eyes thrill into ecstasy queenly Virginia, the mother of presidents. . . .

" It has been said that whoever makes two blades of grass grow where one grew before, helps God. Even so might our brethren have their requiem chanted by angels, for, whether in fields as farmers, trying with the aid of nitrogen, phosphoric acid and potash to tickle the soil, so it may laugh into a joy of beautiful snow-white fleece; or in boats, bringing their precious finds ashore where the wind's feet shine along the sands, and her amorous teasings bloom into a foam of flowers; whether in the schoolroom far in the ringing plains of windy Troy, fighting anew with Hector and weeping with Hecuba; or in the forum, like Demosthenes, ' bolstering up the falling columns of a dying republic,' or warning the Athenians against the Macedonian of pride, greed, envy, ignorance and vice; whether like true sons of Æsculapius bringing ease to the wearied body or like patient followers of Freud and Paul Dubois, ministering unto the mind diseased; whether behind the counter and the railing in daily toil, spelling competency, sobriety and frugality, or in the sacred pulpit, ministers of the Glad Evangel, all lit with eloquent flame, purifying souls for the beatific regions, they proved excellent co-workers with God. They all demonstrated satisfactorily the Pythagorean Theorem that the square erected on the hypotenuse of a right-angled triangle is equal to the sum of the squares on both the other sides. In the living of their lives—the right-angled triangle—they made the Great Jehovah their hypotenuse. Upon that they squared, and that square was sufficient to cover those on the other two sides—one the present life, the other the Life to come. . . ."

Aggrey was a member of several learned societies in England, France and the United States, including the American Negro Academy and the Negro Society for Historical Research. In 1907 he read a paper on " Physical Characteristics of the Native of the West Coast of

Africa" at a meeting of the Negro Academy. This, he wrote to his friend Holland, "will be discussed anthropologically, sociologically, medically, historically, and other-ically." The first draft of this essay was preserved among his papers. He discussed, among other questions, the relative sizes of the white and black man's skull and argued strongly against the assumption that the smaller cubic capacity of the latter was proof of the Negro's inferior intelligence. There was a characteristic passage on the Negro's astonishing memory:

"For centuries he has carried on his mind—somewhere between or around the inconceivable spaces between the minute molecules of the brain—all his computations of times and seasons, all his materia medica and therapeutics, all his traditions and laws, and all that melody in his soul or mind —melody the intricate shadings of which no musician has yet been able to faithfully reduce within the narrow confines of bars, measures and staves, semibreves, quavers and appoggiaturas. Yes, all that melody, the parent of the only original American music, which when heard whether amid the roaring mountains of Sierra Leone, by the limpid waters of the Congo, throughout the length and breadth of the Gold Coast, or amid the cornfields of Southern America, outrivals in sweetness the music which the sea-nymphs sing at twilight when darkness and dusk meet—so sweet, captivating and enrapturing as to compel the centaurs to leave their mountain homes and stand on the beach where the tides ebb and flow that they may catch the notes as they float on the evening air. Did Sir Flower add that when he measured the Negro's brain? Who can compute the weight of the sealed silences, the heart throbs, in the bosom of the Native African whose message to the world has been too precious to be reduced to writing on dust and ashes? Like Socrates, the intellectual father of Plato, like the lowly Nazarene who has thrilled the world, the West African never wrote a line since he left his native heath.* Perhaps if Professor Flower could weigh the brain of such a typical Negro with the memory of the ages, and that of the European, both living and active, he might discover wherein comes the sword of Brennus to weight the scales. Until then

* He evidently means Ethiopia and Egypt.

I plead as far as the natural and inherent superiority of brains is concerned, 'Not proven.'"

The following passage is interesting:

"I have often been asked what is the Native African's idea about the colour of a man's skin—what shade is his preference? I cannot say exactly whether he has any particular preference, but from philological as well as sociological reasons I affirm that he prefers the type—the most pronounced shade in each type. With the light brown he admires the perfect light brown without any shadings, with the brown the deepest of that shade, with the red the deep red, not light red, with the white, the purest white, and with the so-called black, the blackest—*dukudukuduku*. And observation and history as well as tradition have recorded some special leanings toward the blackest. I remember now when but a youth how I used to hear my elder brothers and their friends go into ecstasies over a young woman in the bloom of feminine beauty—very dark in complexion of the jet black kind, harmony of shape, long black hair and dark winning captivating eyes, pearly teeth—to them and to me her step was music and her voice was song."

In November, 1903, Aggrey was ordained Elder in the Zion Methodist Church. For some years, as often as his other duties allowed, he preached in the coloured churches of North Carolina, and then in November, 1914, he took over the pastorate of two small churches, Miller's Chapel and Sandy Ridge, the one eight miles and the other ten from Salisbury. On Sunday mornings he visited them alternately, going out in a light horse-buggy, and sometimes walking when the road was otherwise impassable. This pastorate was one of the most important incidents in Aggrey's life. It took him out of an academic atmosphere and introduced him to the actualities of the life led by the American Negro. His congregations were, when he took charge of them, largely illiterate, desperately poor, and suffering all the disabilities

meted out in the southern States to descendants of the slaves. What had the professor of English literature to offer these folk ?

One Sunday morning in September, 1928, Dean White, of Livingstone College, drove Mrs. Aggrey and myself in his car to Sandy Ridge. We went along a broad highway and then turned off in the direction of the chapel, passing on the way many of the small dingy, unpainted, wooden cabins occupied by Negroes and standing in the midst of fields of cotton, all bursting into the " snow-white fleece " of Aggrey's Eulogy. Sunday school was in session when we arrived and the congregation was assembling, many of the people evidently coming from a distance. I counted twenty motor-cars parked around the chapel. It was delightful to see them drive up, with bright little Negro faces peeking above, or peering through the windows. About two hundred persons were present, all well dressed and spotlessly clean. There were girls wearing silk stockings, but not over-dressed. A very few professional men are members of the Church ; the majority being small farmers and labourers. They are liberal in their gifts. A collection was taken for the poor, and before the close of the service tables were arranged for the receipt of offerings, which one by one the people brought forward—contributions toward the minister's salary, class-moneys, and donations toward the building of a much-needed new church. The elders insisted upon my preaching—and I never had a more appreciative audience. The warm-hearted Negroes love to give vent to their feelings ; " Yes, sir," " That's right," "Amen," they cried again and again that morning. The way they sang Negro melodies moved one's heart indescribably.

This was one of Aggrey's congregations, but not as he found it. Those people, and the circumstances in which they lived, were very largely transformed under his ministry. At the close of the service they gathered around, to clasp my hand and to talk of their beloved pastor. A venerable white-haired Negro spoke in tones of barely-controlled emotion : " The years that Professor

Aggrey was here were the Golden Age of this church; men may come and men may go, but the footprints left by him will never fade, and we shall always try to tread in them."

They were proud of having a real live Professor for their pastor; and they found that this man, who to their simple minds was a prodigy of learning, could speak in homely fashion to their hearts. He enjoyed talking to children; some of the stories which afterwards thrilled great audiences in England and Africa—his famous story of the Eagle, for example—were first told to the Negro boys and girls. In the old days worship in Negro churches was usually strongly marked by emotionalism. Aggrey was too wise to suppress emotion; but he controlled it and guided it into practical channels. "There was always *gravy* in his sermons," said one Negro to me, "good solid meat, yes in plenty, but also gravy that made it tasty." No man could appeal to the feelings more effectively than Aggrey, but his was largely a teaching ministry, and his teaching turned always upon the application of Christian truth to the needs of daily life. He grew to see plainly that advance in Christian character depended in that community upon the attainment of economic independence—the displacement by self-respect of the mentality inevitably bred by centuries of slavery and which emancipation had not yet completely eradicated.

Years afterwards Aggrey used his experience at Miller's Chapel and Sandy Ridge to point a moral when addressing the students at Lovedale in South Africa.

> "You should be *doing* religion and *living* education," he said in his vivid way. "I will explain what I mean by *doing* religion. I went to the Mission. I finished standard vii and four years in High School. I taught for nine years, then I went to America and graduated from college. I went to the country to preach. I could quote Hebrew, Greek and Latin, and so on, but what did my people care about that? My people were poor, living eight or ten in one room. They wanted something, and I failed as everyone else ought to fail who preaches that kind of theology. I was in an aero-

plane, and I had to come down. I started preaching on, 'Give ye them to eat'—preaching chickens, goats, something to eat, something to wear. I had a sermon on the angels. I told them that mosquitoes, flies and so on, were messengers from God. Mosquitoes come to say, 'There is death round here; I am talking to you; don't you hear me? As long as you don't hear it, the swamp stays and will give you disease. Clean it.' Then they sing another song, 'Let thy servant depart in peace.' After church we had a meeting to appoint a look-out committee. They found an old lady who had no wood at all. They said, 'She won't come to church.' I detailed about ten to get wood and help people and they began to come.

"The kind of Christianity we have to practise is to go round helping people, and then when you pray they will say, 'Amen.' There is too much talking; talking is cheap, unless you want to use a long-distance telephone, then you have to pay the price.

"When I went to Miller's Chapel, the people were very poor. My house had many rooms, electric light and all the modern appliances, but I thought it was a sin to stay there all the time. I told my members I was going to come and stay in their houses. I did so; they slept eight or ten in a room with the windows stopped up; they were afraid of the night air. I asked if I could open one a little bit. You must not talk *at* people—you must talk *to* them. I believe in prayer and I had to pray to be able to eat their food: it was so bad-looking. I said, 'Next year I am going to take a census of the chickens that you raise.' They are easy to raise, the meat is good, and the eggs are the best food for man or child. You expect people to bring money from America! Help yourselves: rear chickens. White people want eggs and good eggs, and they don't care whether they are a white man's or a black man's. . . .

"I told my people what the land needed to enrich it; told them to put in lime and so on, and they were able to pay a little better. Mr. Thomas Miller, the man who looked after my salary, owed a thousand pounds. I said to my people, 'Let us go to work to raise to pay it,' and they did. Then I preached on such texts as, 'A sower went forth to sow,' 'Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone.' Some of us preachers don't know anything

about agriculture. The Master knew what to do. He knew how to build; He was a contractor. Get woodwork too; but the important thing is the soil. If you have only got a yard, you can build up to Orion and the Pleiades; and you can dig down until it goes through to China.

"I began to tell the people how to feed their children. So many are lost through ignorance of the laws of nature—some of these may have been destined to be Luthers, Booker Washingtons, and so forth. If you knew how to cook, you could change the world. Among my church members now they have nineteen automobiles. Fifty new houses have been built. Now when I preach they say, 'Amen,' and 'Hallelujah!'"

Aggrey talked about those chickens on other occasions—once in a tumultuous gathering at Pretoria, in South Africa, when the thousand Africans present had been excited by the chairman against the Whites.

"In an American village the Blacks complained once to me that the Whites never spoke to them. I answered, 'Produce something that is useful to Whites, and they will talk to you. Raise chickens, have eggs to sell, and you will see a change.' I set myself in season and out of season, even in my sermons, to advise the raising of chickens, and soon all the Blacks had them to sell, and eggs, and the attitude of the Whites changed toward them, and they grew, some of them, wealthy. You must make yourselves indispensable—that is how you can improve your condition."

I had an opportunity of visiting one of the fifty houses that Aggrey says were built by his people; it belongs to Mr. Thomas Miller, the man who looked after his salary. The car in which we drove from Salisbury turned off the high road into a rough track running through woods. We came to a clearing where cotton bushes were growing, and there we found Mr. Miller, a tall, thin, closely-cropped, lean-faced Negro. He started life, he told me, with six dollars and a wife. He rented a bit of land and lived in a rude wooden shack. He became a new man under Aggrey's influence. Aggrey's practical teaching laid hold of him. He saved money and with the help of others gradually acquired 120 acres of land; he told me

it was all paid for. Aggrey urged upon him the building of a new house, and there it stands : a handsome two-storey building of wood, well-painted, a wide verandah in front, with brick and stone piers. The wood was largely cut from his own farm and the harder planks were purchased by the sale of some of his soft timber. Within, carpets and pictures, a piano, good furniture, all immaculately clean, tasteful—a house of which any man might be proud. I was introduced to his wife, a tall handsome woman, who was busy canning fruit for the winter. They have four daughters, who speak excellent English ; they drive every morning in their father's car to Livingstone College in Salisbury, returning in the afternoon to pick cotton or do other work on the farm ; it is said of them that they can plough as skilfully as men.

I was not surprised to hear Mr. Miller say that Aggrey was the greatest coloured man who ever lived. He is not the only Negro who thinks so. He is one of hundreds to whom Aggrey made God real.

In March, 1920, when writing to accept the invitation to join the Phelps-Stokes Commission, Aggrey related to Dr. Jesse Jones some of the results of his ministry.

To Dr. Jesse Jones. Salisbury,

March 5th, 1920.

. . . In appreciation of the work done among the rural folk the two churches made me an offer of 600 dollars a year five years ago, but I would not accept more than 500. Every year they pay me more than they promise and I have not once asked about salary. I am kept too busy improving conditions. In one of the church communities there were cases of illegitimacy every year. They had court cases every now and then, and fights and drunks. When Bishop Clinton asked me to go there I remembered the case you cited concerning a camp meeting or a protracted meeting when you spoke to us in Atlanta at Clark University. I bought a playground, organised the people young and old in both churches and made the churches community centres. Now Baptists, Presbyterians, Lutherans and even the Holiness people all

regularly attend my bi-weekly services and commune together.

We buy fertiliser by the car load and save them money. My Pastor's Steward in one of the churches owed 4,500 dollars when I went to the work five years ago. He did not expect to get out of debt under fifteen years. By listening to me and acting accordingly he paid out the last cent last fall.

There has not been a case of drunkenness, *not a single case* before the magistrate, and there has not been a single case of illegitimacy. The State Board of Health sent a photographer here last summer to take the pictures of my two groups showing the best work done in community league work in the State. The pictures appeared in the State *Bulletin*. These promised me last year 800 dollars and paid me nearly 900, aside from the things they gave me from the farms. This year they tell me they will go to a thousand dollars.

I cannot tell you how we attended between 60 and 75 cases of influenza, visiting every case among the members, and the fact that we have not had a single death even though we had four cases of double pneumonia. Given the right medicine and proper nursing, prayer works wonders among my people. These good folk told me three years ago, and keep repeating, that the only time they will give me up is when they will grant me leave to go to Africa! Prophets they are, and have been, and never knew it!

At one time no fewer than eleven boys and girls from one of Aggrey's little country churches were attending Livingstone College. The story of one of these lads well illustrates both the innate capacity of the Negroes and the way in which Aggrey helped them.

One evening at Salisbury, after a delightful dinner, well cooked and most tastefully served, my hostess, Mrs. Overman, one of the leading ladies of the city, invited me to have a talk with her cook. A smart Negro of about twenty-five was brought to me in the library. He told me his history. His father was a small farmer and very poor. The boy proved himself (this I learnt from others) the champion cotton-picker of the district; he could gather 300 lb. of cotton in a day while others could not average

more than half as much. He attracted the attention of Aggrey, who persuaded the parents that he should be educated. Since the boy would have to work his way through college, Aggrey introduced him to the notice of Mrs. Overman, who gave him a job in her kitchen, and afterwards promoted him to be cook. After twelve years of work he graduated Bachelor of Science, and all the while he had worked part of his day in the kitchen. At times his heart well-nigh failed him, but Aggrey's cheerful sympathy nerved him on. At the time I met him he was teacher in a school some ten miles out of town, and every morning, after a spell of house-work, he went thither in a small motor car which he was buying on the instalment plan, returning in the afternoon to cook the dinner for the household. His ambition was to save money enough to pay his way at Columbia University and win the M.Sc. degree, so as to be better fitted to serve his people. A story creditable alike to the lad and to his white mistress, as well as to Aggrey.

In his educational work among his two congregations Aggrey was greatly helped by Mr. Thomas B. Patterson, who about 1916 joined the Livingstone College staff as an agriculturist, and is now at Hampton. Born in South Carolina of parents who had been slaves, this very remarkable Negro was trained at Hampton Institute, and after spending some years in teaching, took an abandoned farm of six acres in Schuykill county, Pennsylvania. " My ambition," said he, " was to show the world that the Negro has the same ability as the white man, if he only gets the chance to prove it." The results which he obtained were a revelation to his white neighbours, who began to adopt his methods and slowly changed the face of the district. By his probity and skill, Mr. Patterson won the respect of all. He came to Livingstone College to take charge of the farm. Up to that time the industrial side of the curriculum had been neglected ; neither masters nor pupils showed much interest in it—" we don't come to college to learn agriculture," said the latter. Manual labour was despised by many of the students.

Mr. Patterson was persuaded that his people would never win a place for themselves in the sun, unless they adopted sound methods of agriculture and produced better crops, and until the educated men and women lost that contempt for handwork which was the inevitable legacy of the past.

It was the doctrine preached by Booker Washington and other leaders. Aggrey's own experience had convinced him of the truth of it.

From the first day of Mr. Patterson's arrival at Salisbury the two men became fast friends. Aggrey told him of his efforts at Miller's Chapel and Sandy Ridge and they decided to work together. One cold rainy day in the winter of 1917 they went out to Miller's Chapel and gathering the leading men of the neighbourhood in the church, expounded their plan for a farmers' club. Patterson was a stranger and, but for Aggrey's influence, would have found it difficult to overcome the inertia. Their enthusiasm proved infectious; the club was founded; news of its success spread, and soon another club was established at Sandy Ridge. The women were also taken into the movement. Aggrey and Patterson went out regularly to meet the Clubs; Aggrey to talk on home and social life, Patterson to give lessons and demonstrations on sowing, soils, poultry, and so on. Mrs. Patterson taught better methods of butter-making.

Mr. Patterson was anxious to link these efforts on to the State scheme, which was part of a general movement throughout the South to improve agriculture. Eventually he resigned his position at the College and became the Government Agent for Rowan county in connection with the scheme. He continued to help Aggrey, however, and together they organised Clubs in other communities. This social service developed in several directions. A Negro Community League was formed with the intention of enlisting every person in the several localities. Three committees attended to education, health and agriculture. At Miller's Chapel almost every man, woman and child became a member of the League, and everything for the uplift of the community was done through it.

The County Supervisor of Education worked through it; the Farm Demonstrator (Patterson) worked through it; the Minister (Aggrey) worked through it. The committee on education saw that a new school was required and set about it forthwith. The material was purchased, the building was erected and furnished, all without aid from anybody but the people themselves—a model rural school. The agricultural committee handled such things as pig corn and poultry among boys and girls, and canning among both girls and women. The health committee looked after sanitation and housing conditions. Recreation, music, agriculture, with religion informing, inspiring, colouring the whole, were set forward together as means to a better life. Before me lies the programme of the First Annual Conference and Picnic of Negro Farmers of Rowan county, held at Livingstone College in September, 1918. Devotional exercises opened the day; then followed addresses on such subjects as " How to raise an acre of corn," " How to raise hogs," and these were interspersed with solos and choruses. At the foot of the programme is the name " J. E. Aggrey, Master of Ceremonies."

Few of the Negro farmers around Salisbury owned their land when Aggrey and Patterson began their ameliorative labours. The majority rented farms or worked them on the share system with their white landlords. Perhaps the greatest drawback to the struggling farmer was a lack of capital; he had to borrow at ruinous rates of interest the money he required for buying fertilisers and for other purposes. Not many farmers lived free from an overwhelming burden of debt. Mr. Patterson, with Aggrey's whole-hearted support, organised a Credit Union, the first Negro organisation of its kind, to assist the farmers. Aggrey was one of the earliest shareholders. The Union received deposits from men, women and children, thus encouraging thrift; lent money to members, enabling them to purchase necessary supplies; and bought at wholesale prices, and supplied at comparatively low rates, large quantities of fertilisers.

In addition to his work in connection with the Credit Union, Aggrey was for a time secretary-treasurer of the Rowan Realty Company, formed to assist Negro farmers to purchase land. He was also a director of the Salisbury-Spencer Building and Loan Association.

The close partnership which we have described lasted for about ten years. Patterson conceived an unbounded admiration for his associate. For the people among whom they worked Aggrey became, he says, a fetish. "Early and late we travelled together up and down the county trying to help the farmers improve their living conditions," he writes. "It was on these trips that I got a chance to study the innermost workings of his heart and mind, which were broad and loving. He would go to any length for those who needed him in his pastoral work. . . . He was the greatest inter-racial advocate I ever saw. He believed in everybody, and it seemed to me that everybody believed in him. They just could not help doing so. Unlike most pastors who held charges in the county, Dr. Aggrey made a point of visiting every member of his two churches at least once a year, and no home was too humble for him to go into and make its occupants happy with his cheery smile, which only increased their love for him. Only once in a generation does such a man as he arise in any race."

During all this period Aggrey was not only giving, he was getting ; he learnt as well as taught. His experiences went far to mould his conceptions of education. In later years he urged Patterson to join him on the Gold Coast, for he was convinced that his fellow-countrymen needed to learn the lessons which Miller's Chapel and Sandy Ridge had taught him. It was not merely people with a tradition of slavery who required such education : it was, he believed, good for all, black and white.

To T. B. PATTERSON. At Sea, s.s. *Aba*,
November 20th, 1925.

. . . I wish I had a man like you with me in Africa. I am going to help lift my people not only religiously and

educationally, but also in trade—economically—agriculture and commerce. If we are to be counted in we must not only produce religious leaders and intellectual giants, but consecrated millionaires, so that we can endow our institutions and send religious, educational and economic missionaries into the interior. If you beg, you must not be surprised if they treat you like a beggar. And I believe there would be a better kind of co-operation between us and other races the sooner we pass the begging stage.

A word must be said about Aggrey's relations with the white citizens of Salisbury. A very strict colour line is drawn in North Carolina, as in other southern States. But the Whites show considerable respect for individual Negroes of whose worth they have become aware. Aggrey had many warm friends and admirers in the city ; perhaps it was easier for them to be his friends because he was an African, not an American Negro, and his forefathers had never been slaves. I heard leading citizens speak of him with the utmost respect, and even with affection. " He was my pal," said a gentleman who had been mayor of Salisbury. " The finest Negro ever known," said another. " I would have trusted him with money as I trusted my father." He was invited to their homes. As financial secretary of the College he had frequent business with the local bank, and Mr. McCorkle, then the Cashier, was impressed by him (so he told me), even when he knew him only as a teller knows a client who comes in to draw money or pay it in. Aggrey's statements were always clearly written and faultlessly accurate; his demeanour was always dignified and modest. Mr. McCorkle came to know him more intimately and learnt to honour him for his sterling qualities. Occasionally Aggrey was embarrassed for want of money, for the College ran short of funds and for perhaps six months

could not pay his salary. Then, because he was ashamed to owe money to tradesmen, he would be compelled to ask for advances from the bank—advances always readily accorded and faithfully repaid. He deeply appreciated the confidence that was reposed in him. I have before me a letter written on June 11th, 1925, to Mr. McCorkle, which ends thus : " I want to thank you for your kindness. I am sure that your missionaries have told you that the African is a grateful being, and I have every reason to be grateful to you. Mr. McCorkle, it is not only what you do, but how you do it that touches me deeply."

One afternoon soon after his arrival in America, Aggrey with a fellow-student called at a store in Salisbury to purchase a trunk. His demeanour struck the merchant, Mr. Smoot, very favourably. Some years later, when Mr. Smoot was Registrar of Deeds, Aggrey called to sign some documents. He asked Aggrey his history, which interested him so much that he invited him to his house. They became close friends, and Aggrey often asked his advice. Mr. Smoot told me how an action of Aggrey had saved Livingstone College from destruction when a mob of baser fellows was excited after a lynching in the city. I find an account of this incident in a letter written by Aggrey.

To Mr. Smoot. Achimota College,
July 10th, 1926.

. . . Handicapped ! Be morose, resentful, and you create here your own Inferno. Be cheerful, resistless, and the iron in you strikes upon the flint of adversity and a spark flies that sets a wilderness ablaze and a nation is born. The South is handicapped. Sometimes I think the North does not understand fully, else better progress were made. And sometimes my heart would bleed to see how the South was failing to stop and gather up diamonds at her feet. It is not for nought that God let two races live side by side, sometimes together, often in close confidence at home, for three centuries. Many have learned to understand the black. As yet the white English, French, German, all, don't get the psychology of the African. His music does not appeal to them as it appeals to the Southern white man—and music is the speech

of soul, the language of the real Ego. You and Mr. Gregory understand us. I have been in close relations with you long enough to know that you understand us. You understood me when nearly, or fully, twenty-five years ago, I bought that trunk. You understood me so well and I understood you so well that it was the love I had for you that made me consent to allow the chain gang on my farm to get the rocks to macadamise three miles of the old Statesville Road from Jump and Run stream to the city limits of Salisbury. Do you recollect, Mr. Smoot ?—you were then the Clerk of Court, or Registrar, or Secretary of the Board of Aldermen or County Commissioner. Anyway, they sent you, and at that time I was the only one who had a place near with rocks on. I was to charge by the square yard, you remember, after they had finished. I had thought of building a stone house and did not care to part with the rocks, but your speech, your plea, won me, and I consented. At the completion of the road, you came to my house again in a horse-and-buggy—I remember distinctly. You pled that I should not ask too much because the county was poor. But I had decided what I was going to do. You had won me for the county. I shall never forget the sparkle in your eye when I told you to tell the county officials that I would not charge anything for the rocks that macadamised three miles : it was my contribution to the improvement of the county. . . . And, by the way, it is unwritten history, but true—that the night those Lyerlys were lynched at Henderson Grove, a white friend of mine told me a few days after that he went to see what the crowd was doing. After the lynching, someone, obviously a farmer or country folk, said, " Now let us go and burn up the nigger college," and they might have done so, but, this friend whom you know very well told me, one man said, "No, let's don't, because one of the professors there gave us rocks to macadamise the road from here up to Jump and Run and wouldn't charge a cent." " Is that so ? " they asked. " Sure, because I know." And the College was saved, because you had won me, and I had not refused to be won. I have never repeated this openly, but I thank God you won me. . . .

Another incident is related in a letter to Dr. Jesse Jones.

To Dr. Jesse Jones. Livingstone College,
February 14th, 1920.

Yesterday Mr. McCubbins, one of the leading citizens of this town—owner of a Hotel, a Realty Company and a large plantation, and withal a great Red Cross worker—drove to my house to tell me that the County Board of Health, through the County Physician, told him that my survey of the Great West Ward was the best report sent in. Because of the influenza situation a general survey had to be taken of the sick. The others had been working for nearly a week when they asked me, the only coloured, to help in finding out about the West Ward—the largest ward, also including many coloured people. I told them I would be ready in less than twenty-four hours to give a detailed report. They wondered. But I turned my class in sociology, now studying social problems, into a seminar, divided the Ward into seven units, taught them how to go about the survey, how to gain the desired information: name, disease, physician, needs if any. In four hours the units returned with reports. I tabulated the same: 332 houses visited, 94 cases of sickness, 66 of those being influenza and bad colds, 5 cases needing help. In each case address given—I mean of the 94. In six hours from the time we started I had handed in the report, and in twenty-four hours from the time they asked me to look after it the Red Cross and the Associated Churches were relieving the needy. We send in daily reports. The students, seven of them, worked with a will. But the knowing how was due to my training under Professor Shenton, and a friend, Dr. Thomas Jesse Jones, inspired me to enter that department in Columbia. He has helped save some lives here in Salisbury, for we discovered some desperate cases—just in time.

In 1920, Aggrey was asked to write some account of his career in view of his appointment as a member of the Phelps-Stokes Commission. He supplied some notes, but wrote: "I have not been very anxious to tell people of what may have been accomplished. The burden of my life is the line in 'In Memoriam,' quoted by Cecil Rhodes:

'So much to do, so little done.'"

CHAPTER VIII

AT COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

TO his nephew Kwesi Ahin, Aggrey wrote that he had won several degrees, but that it was the working for them and not the possession that interested him. " I don't care about using titles. It is not the hood that makes a monk.

> ' 'Tis not the casket that I prize
> But that which in the casket lies.' "

He also confessed that he was ambitious to gain honour for his race and country. In 1918 he wrote, from America, to his nephew : " I have been trying since I came here to hold up my native country, of which I am pardonably proud. There are intellectual giants in this country, but when they are of Negro descent [i.e. mulattos] some of the white Americans say that the good in them comes from their white strain of blood, and that the low, base, and criminal traits are inherited from Africa. I am combatting this erroneous idea. [Here follows an account of his studies.] All this to show that the Negro is a man, and given chance will make his place in the sun, to help make the world a fit place for creatures who were made in the image of God, and unto whom the Prophet of Nazareth said, ' Love ye one another.' "

We have seen that in 1904 Aggrey attended classes at Columbia University, New York. Nine years elapsed before he resumed his studies there. This break was due, not to any lack of eagerness but to lack of money. His salary was small ; at one time we find him complaining that the Livingstone College authorities declined to in-

crease it to 70 dollars a month. The income which he derived from his writings and occasional fees was not large. When, later, he accepted charge of the village churches he stipulated for no regular stipend, but accepted what they could give, which was never a great sum. That his money was well spent is proved by the fact that Aggrey built and furnished his house, accumulated a large library (in 1918 he said it was worth over £1,000), and bought a small farm, the profits from which (when there were any) added to his income. In the early years of married life his resources were meagre, and he had a wife and growing family to support.

While he could not afford to spend his summer weeks in New York, Aggrey was during these years continually learning something. At one time it was law, at another shorthand. He also took lessons in mechanotherapy, and in February 1914 was made a Doctor of Osteopathy, after a correspondence course at the International College of Osteopathy, Elgin, Illinois. He practised these arts upon his people—they believed he could do everything, and had unbounded faith in him.

Aggrey returned to New York in 1914 for the summer session at Columbia University. This seat of learning ranks with Yale, Harvard and Princeton as one of the Big Four of the United States. Its nucleus was King's College, founded in 1754; a gilt crown, said to have been given by King George II, is preserved as a trophy in the Faculty Club. Over 4,000 students were enrolled in 1914. Teachers' College, part of the University, where Aggrey did much of his work, is the largest institution of its kind in the world and is attended by students from many countries.

Aggrey had been advised by his friend, Dr. Jesse Jones, to study sociology and had been given an introduction to Dr. Giddings, the professor. This summer he also studied Educational Psychology and Spanish. We fortunately possess a vivid account of some of his experiences in a letter which he wrote to his friend Trent—" Zeus," as he called him.

To W. J. TRENT, New York,
August 26th, 1914.

I did succeed in getting to New York and in entering Columbia once more. The very ground felt sacred, and I determined to make good, in spite of odds against me. . . . I borrowed 75 dollars and came on. . . . My registration expenses, rather tuition, cost me exactly 50 dollars. It would have cost fifty-five, but being an old student of Columbia they cut off five. So I paid fifty dollars for tuition in Educational Psychology . . . in Spanish, and in General Seminar Course in Sociology. . . . It cost me in all not less than 10 dollars a week for board and room rent, and car fares and laundry, sometimes more. Besides these I had to keep up my home and family in Salisbury. Add all this together, then put on top of them the books I had to buy and you can imagine, with my railroad expenses here, my expenses. I had to leave my house soon after 7.30 in order to get to Columbia by 8.15, as the lectures in Educational Psychology began then. I was in school until after 2.30—had a class from 8.15 to 9.15, from 9.30 to 10.30, from 10.30 to 11.30, then from 1.0 to 2.30. I hurried up a lunch or dinner at the University commons, and either studied until evening or came home to 136th Street by almost a circuitous route, and either got ready to fill a preaching or speaking engagement or visited places for sociological studies. Mind you I had to study for four classes, and in two of them I had to carry work done every day. Well, I was here, and I was not going to say " die." I preached or spoke almost—rather, practically —every Sunday, sometimes twice, sometimes thrice a Sunday. . . . I have preached both in white churches and coloured; have spoken to Methodists, Congregationalists and Moravians, and have addressed both the Y.M. and the Y.W.C.A. Sunday afternoon gatherings.

I had to make good if I died in the doing—and Heaven sustained me . . . I had to work. Often I would go to bed at 3 a.m., more often at 2, never before 12 or 1, and get up at 5.30 a.m., and would be studying or going to school, or doing research work, or hustling for money. Do you understand now why I could not write you the letter I wanted to? . . .

Well, in Spanish I can now read the beautiful works of Cervantes, such as *Don Quixote*, in the original. We finished

two books in Spanish. Under Dr. Bisch I took the two courses, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, in Educational Psychology and the Diagnosis and Treatment of atypical children. We visited Rendall's Island—examined morons, imbeciles, idiots, epileptics, and other grades of mental troubles. . . . I was the only coloured in all my classes. But I was right there with them. . . .

Well, in examination, F is failure, D is pass, C is good, B is very good, A is excellent. You may be glad to learn that in spite of all the hindrances I made A in all my examinations, and in some had public honourable mention, although the only coloured in the class. I made good. . . .

Of course I can talk freely to you. The general seminar course was open only to post-graduate students. There were only eleven of us in that—four ladies, and seven gentlemen, and of the seven one a Negro. I think all the young women were M.A.'s, and several of the men too. One of them was a Bachelor of Science from Wesleyan University, all working for the Master's or Doctor's degree, most of them for the Ph.D. Well, in our tabulation report work, one day I discovered there were southerners in the class, and even among the northerners there was objection to a coloured man being admitted (if they were asked to vote) to white Social Clubs. That was a chance for me to discuss the race question from a sociological point of view. I served notice, and when the day came I held forth. It was an open parliament. I made no enemy, but rather friends, and Dr. Giddings made me a great compliment before the whole class. I said, I am going back South to teach Sociology, and if my views were untruths I was willing to be corrected. I did not want sentiment, but sense, not fiction, but fact, not prejudice and superstition but conclusions arrived at through logical deductions and inductions based on tenable premises. Well, sir, you ought to have been there. The period was fifty minutes for the whole recitation. . . . Dr. Giddings, before I had spoken ten minutes, halted me and paid me the compliment and told the class that from what he had learned from conversation with me, and what Dr. Jones had told him, I was fully able to answer all questions, that I had had ample opportunities to study the Race question from a very important angle—even more advantageous than those of Dubois and Washington, etc., etc., and that any in the class

was permitted to ask questions. . . . I cannot tell it all. Dr. Giddings agreed with me, and we all decided that it is either through fear or ignorance that the coloured is mistreated. They asked me what I thought would be the best way of solving the problem. I said, the southern white man can do most to solve it. Giddings agreed with me *in toto*, and told the southerners in the class to go back after that speech and start the ball rolling for better affairs. Ever after that I was a lion in the kindliness of all. I won them all. One classmate, Rev. W. H. Sutton, asked me to go and preach for him. I went and preached twice and lectured once.*

Well, after the session closed, Dr. Giddings called me to his private office and made me feel real good. In our work in the class in experimentations proving or disproving Consciousness of Kind, without consulting anybody all through the session it was discovered that four of the eleven of us agreed oftenest in tastes, in ideas of what is the best thing to do, and in recognition of the things of supreme interest. Those four were, to quote Dr. Giddings, one coloured man, one Jewess, and two white men of Anglo-Saxon lineage, and, strange to say, one a Northerner and one a Southerner—proving conclusively Consciousness of Kind. We enjoyed our studies very much.

Then another: Between examinations I paused long enough to write a Latin poem for the *Columbia Student* . . . Dr. Giddings read it, complimented me before the whole class, then asked me to read it. I read and put the sentiments into English, and I was uproariously cheered by the whole class, a Southerner being the first to rise to my seat and shake my hand in congratulations; all congratulated me, thanked me, and said they were going to get copies to keep. That was the last day and we bade each other good-bye. Lots of nice things were said to me by all my class-mates. As I

* The Rev. W. H. Sutton, of Paterson, N.J., wrote Dr. Jesse Jones: "It is a long while since I have heard a more inspiring sermon than the one he delivered to us. Despite his great handicap in coming before a people of different race and therefore critical, he succeeded in inducing us to look beyond him at the great truth he was presenting, and consequently the people are very enthusiastic about him. I cannot praise him too highly and for fear of seeming to overdo the matter will close with the further comment that he is an able and competent servant of the Almighty, and one whom I am proud to call brother."

began to say, Dr. Giddings called me into his private office and there again reiterated the nice things he had been saying before the class. He wants me to come back next summer, to make Sociology my major study. . . . So I am going to come back next summer if I live and continue till I get through in Sociology, Economics, and another study. . . . Pray for me, Zeus, that I may be always humble and allow God to use me.

From Professor F. H. Giddings,

Columbia University,
August 17th, 1914.

Dear Mr. Aggrey,

I have been much pleased with your work in the Seminar in Sociology during the summer session which has just closed, and still more pleased with your whole attitude and relation to the problems that so deeply concern the coloured people. You are in a position to do effective work toward the solution of these difficult issues. The men who retard everything are those who are in too great haste, ignoring the tremendous disadvantages presented by human prejudice, traditions and habits, and those who are too self-seeking, caring more for their own personal advancement than for the advancement and happiness of mankind. I want to give you my heartiest good wishes and my assurance that if in any way I can encourage you, or put you in touch with men and things that can further your work, I shall be most happy to do so.

In the following years, 1915, 1916, 1917, Aggrey resumed his summer course at Columbia, passing the examinations creditably. His purpose during this period was simply to acquire more knowledge. In 1918 he entered as a matriculated student with the definite aim of gaining another degree. Sociology and education were his subjects, but in 1918, because he had become friendly with a student from Japan, he also studied Japanese.

His teachers were sympathetic, and he benefited immensely by their teaching and personal influence.

Chief among them was Dr. Franklin Henry Giddings, professor of Sociology and the History of Civilisation, of

whom Aggrey spoke always in terms of veneration, and who profoundly affected Aggrey's outlook on things.

Other men who taught Aggrey were: Dr. Samuel McCune Lindsay, the professor of social legislation, who dealt with problems of community life and welfare, of labour and industry; Dr. Shenton, who lectured on the principles of sociology; Mr. Bowman, whose subject was the principles of community organisation; Professor Tenny, who lectured on theories of society, social organisation and progress in America; Professor Chaddock and Dr. Ross, who taught the principles and methods of social statistics; and Professor Ogburn, who lectured on psychological factors in social problems. Aggrey also attended the following classes: Professor Keisner's, "History of Education"; Professor Kilpatrick's, "Philosophy of Education"; Professor Hosie's, "Current Problems of Supervision"; Professor Bagley's, "Technique of Teaching." Dr. Monroe and Dr. Bisch also taught him.

Aggrey showed himself a capital student, painstaking and industrious. His teachers were impressed by his independence, his lack of an inferiority complex, his alertness of mind, his thirst for knowledge. He was often the only Negro in his classes and had to rub up against men and women of acute intellect, some of whom had the traditional prejudices against Negroes. But Aggrey never showed that shrinking self-depreciation, nor, on the other hand, that blatant self-assertiveness which coloured men so often exhibit in the presence of Whites who assume attitudes of superiority. To the credit of Columbia, be it said that the authorities have consistently declined to draw any colour line—students of all nationalities stand on the same footing. Aggrey was aware of his own worth. He conducted himself modestly, and with exquisite tact; he was a likeable person, a good "mixer"; he won the hearts of professors and students, who liked him for himself, while respecting him for his abilities and sturdy independence. Some of the students found themselves, perhaps for the first time in their lives, dealing

with a Negro on terms of equality, and realised that there was nothing in his mental constitution to differentiate him from themselves, but common human qualities that linked them together as one. They discovered that "consciousness of kind," about which Dr. Giddings talked so much.

I asked Professor Lindsay, "How did you find Aggrey to compare with white students?" He replied, "I should put him, for intelligence and all the qualities that make a good student, among the foremost ten per cent. of all the students I have known during the last twenty-five years." Other Professors agreed with this estimate.

Aggrey gained immensely from his studies at Columbia. He was compact of feeling; his emotional nature was very deep. His innate proclivities were towards literature—he was essentially a poet, not a philosopher. He had, indeed, a wide knowledge of life: both in Africa and in America he was brought against the hard, and the sordid, realities of existence. Every year he came up to Columbia fresh from intimate contact with Negro peasants, and all the problems presented by them. These experiences prepared him to appreciate and understand the philosophy of society presented by Dr. Giddings and associate professors, even as his extensive practice as a teacher prepared his mind for the educational course. He had an acute perception of the relation between what he learnt in his classes and the facts of his experience. How far he attained a comprehensive grasp of sociological principles may be questioned, but he penetrated quickly to the essentials, and made them his own. Though he struggled hard to do so, he certainly never mastered the subject of statistics. But he did learn the necessity of getting at facts, of accurate observation, when confronted by a difficult situation. He came to grasp something of the complexity of human society, something of the evolutionary processes at work. He learnt, whenever he found people in conflict, not merely to give vent to indignation and cry, "The damnable thing ought not to be," but to ask, "Why do people act like this?" This realist teach-

ing did not lessen his passion for justice, nor did it harden his naturally kindly temperament : it simply brought him to observe and analyse facts, and transformed emotional reactions into reasoned convictions.

Aggrey summed up part of his work in the following letter :

To Dr. Jesse Jones. New York,
August 18th, 1919.

Columbia summer session closed last Friday, but I am still here doing extra work. . . . This has been my sixth consecutive summer under Professor Giddings—two years in Seminar work under him, two in Social Evolution, one in Democracy and Empire, and this time in the Social Systems of the English-speaking Peoples—the contribution of the English-speaking Peoples to civilisation. They have all been intensely interesting, instructive and helpful. This was my fifth consecutive session under Prof. Shenton. He, too, is exceptionally good. I have taken three seminars under him, a lecture course on Social Institutions, and another on the United States as a Society. I took three courses in Educational Psychology under Dr. Bisch, emphasising the diagnosis and treatment of atypical children. . . . He gave us instruction also in the psychological or mental tests, such as the Binet-Simon, the Association, etc. He had me to lecture two days to the advanced class on Eugenics as taught in Africa. I discussed the Poro and Bundo systems. I talked one day (1915) and the class asked him to let me continue the second day. . . . This summer, besides the courses under Prof. Giddings and Prof. Shenton, I took the History of Education, or Historic Foundations of Modern Education, under Prof. Monroe. I thought it would be of help to me in the work you wanted me to do. I took the class open only to post-graduates. The course has been of incalculable help and inspiration to me—quite an eye opener.

Prof. Monroe had me to talk to the class on Primitive Methods of Education—emphasising my native country. He will tell you about it himself. I may add that it was so discussed that another teacher had me to talk to his class in Macey Building the following week on the same subject. . . . Prof. Monroe asked me in his office to put my knowledge along those lines in book form. He made me feel real

humble in the compliment he paid me before the whole class and its reiteration with emphasis in his office. He was even so kind as to say that if I would write it he would see that it was published. . . .

I have taken this much of time because I feel it is my pleasant duty to inform you of my doings here, as it was you who inspired me in the spring of 1914 to enter Columbia's Sociological Department, and also to study under Prof. Monroe. If any success attends my efforts—the credit is mainly due to you and to your personal interest in me.

In June, 1920, Aggrey gained the Teachers' Life Professional Certificate, the highest education diploma granted in the State of North Carolina. So high is the standard, that only thirteen others had been granted at that date, and he was the only Negro who had obtained it. The State offered him a good salary if he would enter its education service.

Aggrey interrupted his studies at Columbia in 1920 in order, as we shall narrate in chapter VIII, to travel in Africa as a member of the Phelps-Stokes Commission. Although it is to anticipate somewhat, we deem it best to complete here the story of his connection with Columbia University.

When, in July, 1921, Aggrey returned to America his friends wisely considered that he should devote all his time to finishing his studies. For one thing, they thought it would be an excellent discipline after a period of travel, incessant talking, and adulation. And, besides, the possession of a doctorate of Columbia University was regarded as necessary in view of the important educational work which he had been invited to undertake in Africa.

The Winter Session of 1921 saw Aggrey back at Columbia. Since he was now without an income—he had resigned his pastorate on joining the Commission,

and was on leave of absence from Livingstone College—the Phelps-Stokes Trustees assisted him. At the end of the year the suggestion was made that, after all, he should go to Africa without his degree. Aggrey was very greatly disappointed.

> "All day long," he wrote Dr. Jones on January 19th, 1922, "I have been under a great mental strain. When I looked at my time it was two o'clock (a.m.), so I went to bed. I heard the clock strike 5, 6, 7, and then I got up. It was no use, I could not sleep for thinking about it. It would seem that my highest hopes were blasted in this particular line. There is too much at stake on my getting that degree —more than you have time for me to tell you. It is the one thing outside of the direct work on the Commission that has nerved me to go ahead and endure the physical and mental pain, sometimes real agony, of three continuous years. For it my wife and children have painfully, yet without complaint, [endured] their husband and father's absence from home, and missed their playmate of a father, who is now a stranger to his own house, and who has lived in a suit-case and handbag for nearly three years. . . . Mrs. Aggrey and children write me to leave no stone unturned to secure my Ph.D. degree. For it I have turned hermit . . . I do not want to leave this country without the degree. I will need it, and need it badly. . . . Dr. Jones, I just can't go to Africa without my degree."

His plea prevailed. His friends, Dr. Jesse Jones and Dr. Giddings, exerted themselves to obtain for him a scholarship at the University, but without success. "Nothing but a hard and fast university rule on the point of age (thirty years) stood in the way of an award," wrote Dr. Giddings. "We highly value Aggrey's work. He is doing well. I expect to be proud of him when he gets into his teaching and public work in South Africa. He does, however, very much need to complete another year here."

The Phelps-Stokes Trustees came generously to his assistance, by voting him a sum of money to enable him to support himself, his wife and three children while completing his course. Mrs. Aggrey joined him in the

summer session, 1922, taking a course at Teacher's College. In October of that year Aggrey was awarded a Diploma signed by the Dean of Teachers' College, certifying that he had " satisfactorily completed a course of study leading to an academic degree and demonstrated professional ability as a Teacher of Education." He gained Honours in six out of eight courses. At the same time he received the Degree of Master of Arts.

He continued his studies through the winter of 1922, and the spring and summer sessions of 1923. Part of the summer was given to a course on Religion, conducted by the chaplain, Dr. Knox. In the following December he sat for his examination and passed with credit. There remained only the dissertation to be written before the coveted Ph.D. could be conferred upon him.

From Professor F. H. Giddings

To Mr. Roy, *Secretary of the Phelps-Stokes Trustees.*

Columbia University,
March 18th, 1924.

I am glad to be asked about Aggrey and to give my estimate of him. He is a man of sound and strong character by all the evidence I have seen in four or five years of acquaintance with him. His personality is unusually pleasing and he makes friends who seek him. He does not have to go after them. He has qualities of leadership: is an exceptionally good public speaker: has seen a great deal of the world and has arrived at wisdom on its big problems. He has acquired a great deal of accurate knowledge and passed creditably his examination on subjects for the Doctor of Philosophy degree. He still has to complete his dissertation.

I strongly recommend him for a responsible teaching position in Africa and think that the institution which gets him may be counted fortunate.

It should be added that Aggrey had before this date taken some courses at Union Theological Seminary, New York. And while working for his degree he continued to study French and German with private tutors.

After his return from Africa, Aggrey was in great

demand as a preacher and speaker. His activities in this direction, which to some degree interfered with his studies, will be described in another chapter. Here we may quote some letters for the sake of the particulars they give of his later years at Columbia.

To Dr. Anson Phelps Stokes. New York.
December 2nd, 1922.

I am writing to-day to thank you and through you the Phelps-Stokes Fund for the fine thing you have done by me in the past . . . and still more the spirit in which it was done. I can never thank you and the Fund enough for what has been done . . . I am anxious to make any sacrifice possible to prepare me for the service ahead of me in the behalf of my people. I have Mrs. Aggrey and three children—and, oh, nobody knows how lonesone I have been . . . Mrs. Aggrey makes some money herself, but it is a strain. But beautifully and cheerfully she bears it all ; hoping that when we get ready to leave we will not have to go through the same experience as since I left home. I am sure we shall not. [He writes a detailed account of his expenses, showing what a struggle he is having to make ends meet.]

The South African Boers in Columbia seem to like me. I talked one day at Milbank Chapel on Race Relations in the South and South Africa. I did not know there were any men Boers present. After the address a number of them came, said everything I said was true, but they said the spirit in which I stated them was far different from irritating. They said if I could speak Dutch and talk to the Boers in the same spirit they were sure I could win quite a number for co-operation. My classmate, Miss Aucamp, a Boer lady, wanted to see Dr. Jones, and Dr. Jones invited her to a meal one afternoon. She wanted me to be present, but I was speaking at Bear Mountain that day. She is now teaching in Pretoria, and writes she will help all she can. The men here have ordered South African Dutch books and they are teaching me Afrikaans. Mr. Malan, relative of the acting Premier, is my regular teacher. He was not well last week, but Mr. Arndt, from Bloemfontein, who is in Kent Hall, took his place and talked with me at length as to how we can work together in South Africa. I am trying to make every day count.

The following letter shows Aggrey as the faithful preacher and spiritual guide:

To The Rev. H. H. Jackson. New York,
September 4th, 1923.

Last Sunday I spoke four times in the Moravian Church, and when 10 o'clock p.m. came I was good and tired. Returning home I was accosted by some young men and a lady (a man and his wife and a friend), seeking some vital information and help. They followed me to my residence and I was explaining and enlightening them at one in the morning. I walked a piece of the way with them and on returning passed by the coloured Y.M.C.A. There I was hailed by a prize fighter who had heard me preach. He was in deep conviction, had thought once of committing triple murder, or at least a double murder. He was very nervous and agitated—he had been anxious to see me ever since he heard me preach at Mother Zion on "The diagnosis and treatment of despair." It was a tremendous moment, so I fired right in. He confessed all, and it was a great delight to see this strong able-bodied man in the pink of strength weep like a child as I tried, with God's help, to tell him God's ways. We stood and talked in the street from two to five in the morning—three hours—but he was saved; now he will enter City College to finish his course and has determined to enter the ministry. I hastened home with a heart of gratefulness to the Master, and went to bed after 5 a.m. At ten, no, 9.30, another young man needed help and came to see me. . . .

Part III

THE INTERPRETER

" I prefer to be Spokesman for my entire country : Africa, my Africa."

" *Africa is feverishly waiting!* We got there—the Commission—at the psychological moment, and now the way is opened I pray that Africa, my Africa, may be helped to realise herself, in order that she may soon take her place in the sisterhood of nations, and under wise guidance stretch forth her hand to God by serving her day and generation."

" Gold Coast gave me birth, God bless her. And my dear mother made the sacrifice, Heaven reward her ! and now I belong to two hundred million Negroes and people of African descent in the world, to plead for them and see that more union and harmony exist between them and the Whites, and between the Whites and them ; and also that they are given chance to bring Africa up to do large services for humanity."

" Dr. Aggrey, we wonder, after all you have gone through in some parts of America and Africa, that you have not lost faith in God and turned sceptic."

Aggrey laughed.

" To this end was I born," he replied, " that I might bear testimony to the truth that men should be too busy to muse over personal wrongs when they are working for the good of humanity. I left my feelings at home ; I am busy working to bring harmony."

" Continue to pray for me. I need the prayers of the saints to keep on seeing the joke as I travel from colony to colony."

" You can never beat prejudice by a frontal attack, because there is mere emotion at the root of it. Always flank it. You can catch more flies with molasses than you can with vinegar."

" I often receive kicks from both sides—white and black. But all of that is in the day's work. One need not be surprised."

J. E. K. Aggrey.

CHAPTER IX

BLACK AND WHITE

IT is advisable, I think, to examine at this juncture Aggrey's attitude towards what is known as the Race Problem. We possess no extended and consistent exposition of his views, and must therefore gather them from fragmentary reports of his speeches and from his letters.

In expounding the problem Aggrey fell back upon the principle of Consciousness of Kind formulated by his teacher, Professor Giddings. "The presence of something that is not like ourselves," said Aggrey, "always produces an emotion, either an emotion of adoration for something not like ourselves but higher, or an emotion of contempt for what you consider to be lower. Psychologically colour prejudice is the emotion of contempt for something not like yourself."

"Birds of a feather flock together." We are all conscious of our kind; we are all conscious of what is not our kind. That is to say, we recognise that certain persons are like—or are unlike—ourselves in colour of skin, general features, habits, traditions, manners. We naturally tend to herd together in sympathetic relations with our kind, and to have antipathy to the rest. Because we are different from others we are apt to regard ourselves as superior to them. In justification of his attitude the white man can point to the solid achievements of his people in material civilisation, in literary culture, in moral progress, as compared to the relative backwardness of the Blacks. This pride in his accomplishments leads to the arrogant assumption that he is intrinsically of more value than other men. Accompanying this pride is

a jealous fear that the other peoples may, after all, be able to learn his accomplishments, compete with him in the economic sphere, challenge his domination, and claim social and political equality with him. He is not prepared to share his privileges, for he imagines that by sharing them he will lose them. He dreads the lowering of the standard he has set up.

In our day the white man's domination and assumptions are actually being challenged. Aggrey frequently insisted upon this fact in his addresses to British and American audiences.

We shall in subsequent chapters follow him in his travels over a large part of Africa.

> " As we went," he said on his return,* " we found a lot of restlessness. It was vocal in the British colonies, subdued in the other colonies. I thank God for that restlessness. Some people are afraid of it. You talk about Youth Movements in other countries. There is a Youth Movement coming in Africa that some day may startle the world. This restlessness all over Africa stands for self-discovery, self-realisation. It tells of power just breaking through. The great continent has been asleep for a long time. It is now waking up. . . . This Niagara, if allowed to sweep through the land, may deluge and inundate cities and towns and bring forth ruin. If under God it can be harnessed, it will turn a dynamo and generate electricity that will illuminate that great continent, chase out the utter darkness and bring a new Africa into being. The Africa of twenty years ago is now gone and gone forever. There is a new Africa coming to-day and it is a challenge to civilisation."

Standing before a map of Africa, Aggrey would sweep his hand westwards from Nigeria parallel with the coast, and indicate an imaginary line curving eastwards through the Sahara and down through the Sudan and East Africa into the south, thus shaping a huge note of interrogation.† The form and position of Africa suggest that it stands as a Question Mark among the continents. And

* As at Indianapolis, see p. 199.

† See the end paper of this volume.

to Aggrey the chief of the queries is : Conflict or Concord between the White and Black races ? Everywhere the Whites are seeking to increase their hold upon the continent ; and the Blacks are becoming less submissive to this domination. Aggrey saw that a situation of extreme gravity was developing—a situation in which the Whites, realising that their supremacy was threatened, would make every effort to maintain it. " The Blacks cannot, as Marcus Garvey suggests," he said, " overthrow the Whites, but there is this truth in what he says : the white man will, if his colour prejudice works continuously against all Asia and all the African races, overthrow himself."

Aggrey knew full well that the Whites hold the key to a solution of this very difficult problem. He also knew them sufficiently to realise that appeals to their fears would never succeed in doing anything but harden their hearts. He did not stoop to such ignoble arguments. He appealed to their sense of justice, and to their Christianity. The position, said he, " is at once the challenge to and the chance for Christianity, and Christianity is the only thing that will save the world."

At the root of the problem, he saw, is a race-feeling in white men, based upon a repugnance for what is different from themselves, and strong in proportion to their preoccupation with what is external in physical features and culture. It weakens as one realises that beneath outward dissemblances there are fundamental resemblances, and identities, between men of various colour—that all men are indissolubly linked by reason of human qualities, however disparate may be the colour of their skins and their traditional cultures. When you see clearly enough, he would say, you become conscious of kind in a larger sense. To overcome colour prejudice men must rise to a plane where it is transcended: "It is in the spiritual realm that the prejudice disappears." The biologist proves that the black skin is only a matter of pigment and adaptation to environment, and not, as some religious folk have imagined, the livery of Satan and the mark of God's

curse. The psychologist proves that there is no absolute disparity between the working of a black man's mind and a white man's. The poet declares "a man's a man for a' that." And the Christian, when he is true to the spirit of his Master, sees in all men the potential children of God, brothers in Christ Jesus. See men as Christ sees them, and these racial prejudices cease to be. Apart from the acceptance and application of a real Christianity, Aggrey saw no solution of the problem.

Aggrey was conscious, as every thinking African is conscious, of the deep gulf that yawns between the Christian faith and much of the practice of professing Christians. He did not need to travel beyond his own experience to prove it.

He was acutely sensitive to injustice—and, be it said, to unfair treatment of Africans by Africans. He identified himself with the bottom-dog. "Over and over again," writes Dr. James Henderson of Lovedale, "I was struck with feelings of rebuke by his peculiarly sensitive sympathy for poor, mean, neglected lives. Broken-down Native people, particularly worn-out old women, the least regarded of the population in a heathen village, appealed to his emotions, and he used to bring warmth and comfort to their hearts by telling them of his own old mother in West Africa and his ties to her. The poverty and frequent want of the people in the villages, uncomplainingly borne, and the squalor and hopelessness of so much of town location life, affected him profoundly. As an African he could not but bear their griefs and carry their sorrows in seeking to walk in the footsteps of his Master." This was true of Aggrey at all times and in all places. He has left on record his anguish of spirit as he witnessed the callous ill-treatment of Africans in Angola.*

* See page 160.

In their spirit and in their method of dealing with the inter-racial situation, Negro leaders are divided into at least three camps. These have been described by a writer in *The New York Age*, a prominent Negro paper.*

> The most pronounced school of his [Aggrey's] day, and even now, is the ultra-radical group of thinkers. They advocate and foster the idea that the African redemption can only come about by polemic measures and schemes of ruthlessness and the dogged force of might.
>
> The ultra-conservative school of intellectuals care little for racial schemes and group achievements. From their point of view the darker races can drift where they please and land where they may. Their strong advocacy is amalgamation. They relentlessly fight under the slogan, "Down with the colour-line."
>
> The bi-racial group is the strongest exponent of civic pride and social betterment. They are proud of their own and seek friendly relationship with other races of their immediate environment. They feel that they are a vital entity in the social order and that they must make a contribution distinctly racial. They are strong adherents of group consciousness and group solidarity. Their methods of accomplishing elements of their objective are orderly and peaceful.

As this writer says, "Dr. Aggrey loomed as dean interpreter of the bi-racial school of thought." He followed Booker T. Washington, though how far Dr. Washington directly influenced him is open to question.

Aggrey could to some extent sympathise with the feelings that underlay the fierce revolt of Marcus Garvey, one of the ultra-radicals. "We ought not to be surprised at a man taking his line," said he. "When a man is kicked about and pushed off lifts and not allowed on trams, and shoved off the foot-walk, he gets fierce unless he has the grace of God very firmly in his life." But for

* Jan. 7th, 1928.

Marcus Garvey's programme, "Africa for the Africans," to be wrought out by brute force, Aggrey had no particle of sympathy, but out-and-out hostility. All through West and South Africa he found this propaganda fermenting in the minds of half-educated Africans, and he lost no opportunity of pouring scorn and ridicule upon Marcus Garvey's pretensions. " Everywhere I have gone they have asked me about the fleet that is coming from America," he said at Lovedale. " I told them I know those two ships and one of them is leaking. If you love your race, tell it all round that Marcus Garvey is their greatest enemy. If you are foolish enough to put money in his pocket—go and do it." Naturally, the Garveyites did not love Aggrey : once at least they threatened to kill him. At one time they frequented his meetings in America—they came to annoy and to harangue, but often remained to admire. He sought earnestly to win them to reasonableness. In one of his letters written in 1922, I find these sentences : " I am happy that the main persons of the Garvey movement have been brought round. I have been praying about it and working persistently, and believed the right would win in the end."

Aggrey was also opposed to that school of American Negroes who looked to amalgamation of the races for a solution of the problem. He was proud of his colour. " I don't believe in merging black and brown and yellow and white in a mixture," he said. " Many of my own people go wrong there. There are, in fact, three camps. There is one in which they say, ' I wish I were white.' You get it in their songs—one that goes :

> Coon, Coon, Coon,
> I wish my colour would fade.

The second line is that of sheer hatred of the whites, yet without any satisfaction in being black. The third is the one that I feel myself most strongly, that I am glad I am black, that God knew His business when He made me so, and He wants to do something through me. The real African idea of purity, which you find in their sacrifices,

for instance, is that the colour should be there in its purity: black 'without blemish,' and white 'without blemish.'" So little was he conscious of inferiority in this respect that he would joke in the presence of white people about his colour and woolly hair. When he was asked why he, a black man, was taken as a member of the Phelps-Stokes Commission, he always replied: "I was put on to lend colour to the situation." This is the way in which he chaffed Europeans:

> A white man once said to me, "African, you are not going to heaven; only white folks are going there, for God is white and the devil is black. When you die you are going to go where the devil belongs, and we will go to heaven."
>
> Of course he was not a missionary, and this African who believed in God with child-like faith was not a theologian, only more or less sensible.
>
> I said: "Well, I have found out in the Bible that no white people are going to heaven, only coloured folks."
>
> "How do you know that?" asked the white man.
>
> "Well, I discovered it in the Bible. Doesn't it say that on the last day the sheep will be on the right and that the goats will be on the left, and doesn't it say that to the goats it will be said, 'Depart ye,' and to the sheep, 'Come, ye blessed'?"
>
> "Well," asked the white man, "what does that have to do with the black folks getting into heaven?"
>
> "What race on earth, except the black race," I replied, "has anything on his head that reminds you of the wool on the sheep?"

Aggrey always urged his people to be proud of their race and colour. He believed they should remain distinct because they had their definite and particular contribution to make to the grand harmony of mankind.

Not amalgamation, not conflict, but co-operation was Aggrey's ideal. He expressed this in his parable of the Piano Keys. "You can play a tune of sorts on the white keys, and you can play a tune of sorts on the black keys, but for harmony you must use both the black and the white." He employed other metaphors to set forth the same message.

When Aggrey was asked for a practical way out from inter-racial animosities, he replied: "As against Marcus Garvey's hostility, I teach the doctrine of love and work; as against Gandhi's Indian policy of non-co-operation, I proclaim all the time co-operation."

The mention of Mahatma Gandhi suggests an interesting comparison of these two remarkable men. They had much in common: both had suffered, individually and as members of their groups, at the hands of white men. Aggrey had the deepest sympathy with Gandhi's idea of "soul-force" as opposed to brute force, with Gandhi's non-resistance as opposed to violent methods; and, like Gandhi, he had a profound fellow feeling for the depressed members of his community. Both men drew their inspiration from the Gospels. But when Gandhi launched his scheme of non-co-operation with the British, the boycott of Government schools and of the reformed Councils in India, ordered the burning of imported materials, and so proclaimed the gospel of Swadeshi, Aggrey parted company with him in spiritual companionship. He agreed with Rabindranath Tagore, who said in opposition to Gandhi: "All humanity's greatest is mine. The *infinite personality of man* (as the Upanishads say) can only come from the magnificent harmony of all human races. . . . To say that it is wrong to co-operate with the West is to encourage the worst form of provincialism and can produce nothing but intellectual indigence. The problem is a world problem. No nation can find its own salvation by breaking away from others. We must all be saved or we must all perish together."

An illuminating episode took place when Aggrey was at Zanzibar. A number of Indians, hearing of the disgraceful manner in which he had been treated by certain white men in Dar-es-Salaam, thought that it would be easy to draw him into an agitation against Europeans. They waited on him, but Aggrey refused their advances. "I stand for co-operation with the white men," he said. "Your friend, Gandhi, makes a mistake when he goes in

for non-co-operation. So long as he persists in that policy he will never help India. It is only through whole-hearted co-operation that wrongs can be righted and men can be helped." The Indian politicians were surprised, confounded, and could find no reply but, " You remind us of the teaching of Christ." " That is because I am one of His disciples," said Aggrey.

Aggrey was once asked by an interviewer : " Can you get your policy adopted ? " He replied : " To start with, you must steady your mind by knowing that its opponents must fail and you must succeed. Non-co-operation is out of harmony with the scheme of the universe. Philosophically it is fundamentally wrong. God by His very nature cannot Himself refrain from co-operation with the men of all races which He has made. Temporarily the other policies might seem to succeed, but the reaction is awful. I would say that we should not blind ourselves at all with the wrong and injustice that the Negro suffers. We recognise the iniquities, but pursue co-operation." He went on to say that during his tour in South Africa he found the principle of co-operation active and vigorous. " The doctrine of love and work ultimately made a triumphant appeal where bitter prejudices have been cleared away."

What does co-operation imply ? I cannot find in available records that Aggrey fully defined the term. It is manifestly capable of various interpretations. In a sense there was co-operation between the slave-owner and his slaves in producing a crop of cotton ; just as to-day, on plantations in certain parts of West Africa (not British) forced labourers may be said to co-operate with the concessionaires in producing palm oil or rubber. There is co-operation on East African farms and South African mines, where the white man finds the capital and the black man the labour. If the resources of tropical Africa are to be developed, seeing that, on the one hand, the white men cannot, or will not, do manual labour, and on the other hand the black man can and does work, but depends upon railways and ships, which he does not

possess, for the transport of his crops, white and black must needs co-operate. Since they need each other and have a common interest in the exploitation of Africa's natural wealth, it is advisable for them to understand each other and work in harmony. That is self-evident. Aggrey included this kind of industrial co-operation in his programme, but he looked for much more. He was not content that his people should be mere servants of the white man. On the contrary, he consistently urged upon them the necessity of becoming economically independent, so far as independence is possible in this world, so that they might be free to choose whether or not they would take service under the Europeans. Where one side gives and the other receives there is no co-operation in his sense of the term. True co-operation involves a certain measure of equality, equality of opportunity, if not of actual political status. It means that each side has something to contribute—something more than brawn on one side and brain on the other—to the well-being of both. Aggrey liked to draw the analogy of games. "There is a lesson for us in football," he was wont to say. "We have the quarter back and the right and left tackle, and the right and left half, and then the centre and the full-back. The ball must be carried over, and when it is carried over it will be not one person, not the team, but the college that won. What I say is this : no man down, all men up—all of them, white, black, yellow, brown, all—all men up, and no man down, each of us as races making our best contribution to the life of all, for each of us has a contribution to make." Aggrey was firmly convinced that Africans have something to bring to the team other than the strength of their muscles. At the same time he was acutely aware that at present the Whites have more to put into the partnership than the Blacks. "Give us a full-rounded chance," said he, "and we will increase our portion." This was, in effect, an appeal to the white man's generosity to share his traditional culture with the less-favoured race—and to be patient. "Be patient with us," was his constant plea. On the other hand, it meant

that the black man must be patient, too, and work hard to make up his deficiencies. And this was, indeed, the doctrine that Aggrey preached consistently to his fellow-countrymen.

So Aggrey stood between the Whites and the Blacks and delivered a message to both.

The things that Aggrey suffered at the hands of white men never threw him off his balance. He did not judge the race by the few who ill-used him. Over against their ostracism and insults he placed the sterling benefits he had received, the real friendships he enjoyed with Europeans. Some men, who did not really know him, might refuse to sit at table with him; but on the other hand, Governors of British colonies invited him to be their guests. He was always profoundly touched by what he saw of the real self-sacrifice made by white men and women on behalf of his people. He never forgot what he and they owed to the missionaries. After travelling through Nyasaland and Southern Rhodesia, he entered the office of the Dutch Reformed Church in Cape Town and said to the Rev. J. W. L. Hofmeyr, the organising mission secretary:

> Mr. Hofmeyr, when I think of what the Boers are doing for my people, I can't restrain my tears. I saw them, the missionaries of the Boer Church in Nyasaland, labouring and suffering, and sending their little children down south for four or five years—and that, all for my people. I saw them coming to their Council from all directions, some in ox-wagons, some in donkey-carts, some on bicycles, travelling days on end and sleeping in the veld, all for my people. And there I gathered with them for a whole week. They sat eight or ten hours a day discussing—what? Their own affairs, or their children's? No; all the time they talked about my people, how they could evangelise and educate and uplift them.

The purely disinterested services rendered to his people by Europeans and Americans—and by no means missionaries only—remained uppermost in his mind whenever he thought of inter-racial difficulties. How could he, in face of this, cherish bitterness against the white race?

As for the Europeans who were inimical, Aggrey deliberately set himself to win them. And be it said at once, he very frequently succeeded. He proved again and again that white men are capable of appreciating to the full the sterling qualities of the Negro. Once on a West African liner, Sir Gordon Guggisberg, who was his fellow-passenger, suggested to the captain that Aggrey should conduct divine service on the Sunday. It was a very unusual occurrence, but after some demur the captain consented. Aggrey preached to a full ship's company that day; there was a record collection; and men who had been hostile or lukewarm in their sympathies, gained a new feeling of respect for Negroes. In South Africa Aggrey was invited to address a meeting of students. One young Dutchman from the Transvaal refused to go: "Catch me going to listen to a black man!" he said. His fellows persuaded him to change his mind. He listened with amazement, and at the end went up to Aggrey and said: "Dr. Aggrey, here is my hand, and when you come again, you can have my bed!"

Aggrey's addresses were always marvels of tact. His shafts, winged with laughter, flew shrewdly home; but he never denounced. He made every allowance for the white man's circumstances. As far as I know he never dwelt upon the greatest wrong inflicted upon his people; if he spoke of the slave-trade and slavery it was to shift the burden from Europeans. "God sent the black man to America. Was all this a matter of chance? You who are philosophers, know there is no such thing as chance; God always has a programme. He meant America to play a special part in the history of Africa." I have heard other Negroes talk in this strain, and it amazes me: I confess I see in the horrors of the slave-trade the work of devils rather than of God.

Aggrey knew that at the root of repressive attitudes towards his people there lay a prejudice, something not founded on reasoned, informed conviction, and not to be destroyed merely by argument. He endeavoured to remove the fear that enters into that complex.

> "I know," he said to a European audience in Natal, "that some say if they educate the black man he will enter into competition with and eventually overwhelm the whites; but that is altogether the wrong view. As the Africans grow to desire more of life they will become greater consumers, and the white men, who have always handled the money, will handle more. When the black man's wants are few he does not work more than is necessary to fulfil those wants. The remainder of the time he is free to breed trouble. As his wants become greater he will work more than formerly, and so will have less time for getting into trouble. That is why I plead for education, and above all for education that is not of the head only, but of the hands too. The fight for race supremacy is foolishness. At the back of it is fear. If all the black men were educated this fear would dissolve, as then they would not follow blindly leaders who may try to lead them in the wrong direction."

He had a story of a Bengal tiger, into whose cage the keeper would enter to tickle the sensations of the spectators. One day the keeper was not feeling well, so he went to an Irishman and persuaded him to take his place. Pat entered the cage and got a bad scare when the tiger turned upon him ferociously. "Faith and begorra, I'm dead, I'm dead," said Pat. Then the tiger spoke: "Don't be afraid. I am nothing but an old Irishman myself!" "And so," Aggrey would conclude, "when we Blacks and you Whites get closer and closer together, we will soon learn not to be afraid, because we are nothing but old Irishmen ourselves, all human together!"

Aggrey sought to answer the white man's questions: Is the Negro possessed of qualities that make for social efficiency? If we receive him into our civilisation, will he betray us? In reply, he spoke of the well-known responsiveness of his people whenever they are given a chance. I may quote again from his speech at Indianapolis.

You took us to the wilderness and with our song and joy we helped you make the wilderness blossom as the rose. You took us to the rivers and we helped to bridge them. You took us to the mountains and we helped to tunnel them.

" Black man of Africa, is there any future for you ? "

We answered, " Try us."

" You have given brawn," you said, " Can you give blood ? "

We said, " Try us," and you tried us, thank God, and on Christmas of 1770 on Boston Common the first blood in the Revolutionary War was spilled. We went on until Salem Poor did his part, and Peter Salem away out yonder answered, and John Freeman at Griswold also answered, and all through the line in New Orleans under General Jackson we did what we could.

But that was not enough. Then the war between the brothers of the North and the brothers of the South came.

" Black man, can you do anything ? "

We said, " Try us."

Abraham Lincoln called, and we said " We are coming, Father Abraham, 100,000 strong."

And they gave us the flag. They said, " You may die, but never surrender this flag," and one black sergeant said, " Master, I will bring back these colours in honour or report to God the reason why." He did report to his God with his blood, but the colours were brought back.

You know what William Carney did when they told him, " Carry these colours." He did it. He was shot, wounded, and came back, and as he fell exhausted he said, " Boys, the old flag never touched the ground."

But the South said, " Yes, black people, you can give blood all right, but are you able to give that which is more important than blood ? "

We said, " Try us." And, thank God, when they were going to war they left their daughters, their wives, their sons in our charge, and there has not been one record where the black man, the slave man or the slave woman, went back on his or her charge. We went through and were loyal.

Both sides can look at us. The Grey can look at us and say, " You did your part." The Blue can look at us and say, " You did your part."

Then another war came, the Spanish-American War, and they asked us, " Black man, can you do your part ? "

We said, " Try us again."

We went over there, and somebody said at San Juan as they began to charge, " Let us sing a song." " What shall we sing ? " They said, " My Country, 'tis of thee."

Then someone said, " Oh, you can't sing that, because it is not your country."

Someone else said, " Sing the Stars and Stripes Forever."

" No," someone answered, " the other fellows get all the stars and we get all the stripes."

So they sang a song that was never heard on the battlefield before : " There'll be a hot time in the old town tonight." Uphill we went, and the Spanish people said they were scared more by the yell and whoop of the black people than by their shot and shell.

Again, the World War came, and they said, " Black people of America, can you play your part ? "

We said, " Try us," and the white people went over there singing and swinging to the rhythm of great American music. They went to Paris and said, " Mother France, here we are, because you gave us Lafayette."

Then someone, who always likes to joke, said, " What can you black folks say ? " The black people said, " We have come, France, because you gave us Alexandre Dumas."

When the train, filled with white boys, good looking soldiers, ready to do battle, swept through Salisbury, this slogan was on the outside of one of the coaches, " We are going to show the Kaiser that he cannot rule the white world."

Then somebody joked us and said, " Now what can you black folks say ? " Then we also swung a train from Asheville, going up by way of Greensboro to Washington, and we had this slogan on it : " We are going to show the Kaiser that fast black won't run."

Africa has tried in the best way she knows to help all nations.

When Marshal Foch was mustering his people against the onrush of the Germans, somebody went and said : " Marshal, supposing they come and kill all of us and take Paris, what are you going to do ? " He said : " Bring up

the Africans, they will stop them," and they brought up the Senegalese.

Just now we are having a lot of trouble Christianising the world. The white, the brown, the red and the yellow are being brought into the ranks, but don't you know that this big war, the war of the Cross, is never going to end in victory until someone comes and brings up the Africans? They will come with their song, with their joy, with their hope, and with their loyalty. Never, thank God, have we produced a man who has been guilty of treason, and we hope never to produce one.

That is the way in which Aggrey talked to white audiences, all the while appealing to what is best and deepest in men and women. He said little or nothing about political rights, knowing that when once the white man adopts the right attitude he will give royally. " You can never beat prejudice by a frontal attack," said Aggrey, " because there is mere emotion at the root of it. Always flank it. You can catch more flies with molasses and sugar than you can with vinegar."

Aggrey often dwelt upon the Africans' capacity for religion and the higher elements in their indigenous faith. In this he was doing his people a real service for it has become a fixed notion, largely fostered, one must say, by some missionaries in the past, that the African's religion, if such it may be called, is a repulsive hotch-potch of cruel, stupid, superstitions, " fetishism," devil-worship, etc., etc. Aggrey used to say :

All Africans are religious, intensely so. In certain respects they are like the Athenians—over religious. Every African knows a God immortal, majestic, Who is above other and less powerful gods, an unfailing Friend, a Father-Mother God. We have sinned against Him. He used to be very near and because of our transgressions He went away. Hence our sacrifices and their meanings. We pray.

It may well be that such descriptions were coloured by his Christian beliefs ; but in essence they were true. He put his people on a level with others when he showed their search for God and their need of clearer vision.

" To the African's soul the name and personality of Jesus and Him crucified alone answers all questions. We always felt there ought to be somebody like that. Africa is a-hungering for the Christ, and Christ Jesus can take that continent in a generation if His disciples will give Him a chance."

In addressing Europeans Aggrey's strongest argument in favour of his people was not expressed in words appealing to reason and emotion—it was himself. They could not deny his ability ; they could not help liking him. It might be said that he was an exceptional person ; that one swallow does not make a summer ; that the finding of one diamond does not prove the existence of a Kimberley. But the conviction was not to be resisted that a race which could throw up an Aggrey was not so hopeless as some people imagined. By being what he was he did more for Africans than all the pleadings of the negrophiles. The common restrictions and repressions seemed absurd when applied to men like him.

Nothing perhaps in his life appeals more strongly than the truly Christian spirit in which he took the insults. Many incidents in this biography illustrate his magnanimity. He was by no means solitary among educated Negroes in this respect.

One afternoon, in a southern American city, he was passing an elegant house outside of which stood a pile of furniture, when a worried white gentleman who was standing by the gate, said to him brusquely : " Here, lend a hand." Aggrey was to him only a nigger provided by a kindly Creator to be his servant. Aggrey stripped off his jacket and for over two hours helped to carry the heavy furniture into the house. When the work was done the gentleman said in the same tone : " How much do you want for that job ? " " Nothing, sir ; I am glad to help

you," said Aggrey with his usual smile, and, putting on his coat, he went his way.

Such deeds do not spring from pusillanimity.

These Negroes have not read the Gospels in vain. They see the similarity between their own position and that of the Jews of Palestine under the dominance of the alien power of Rome. There are Zealots in Africa and America as there were in Palestine. Our Lord refused to follow their path. His words, " Love your enemies . . . resist not him that is evil : but whosoever smiteth thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also . . . and whosoever shall compel thee to go one mile go with him twain," take on a new meaning when read in the light of this ancient and modern situation. It is hard for dominant Romans and Anglo-Saxons not to see in meekness a mere poverty of spirit ; in reality it implies courage of a rare kind, compared with which the soldier's physical bravery is a second-rate quality. When we speak of Aggrey and other Negro leaders as Christian men, we do not mean simply that they accept a series of dogmas—they are not great on dogma. We mean that in these hard conditions of their life they endeavour to act magnanimously in the spirit of Christ—to smile and be courteous when their unregenerate nature would impel them to curse and be bitter. This is their way of applying Christianity to a solution of the racial problem. They do not put on meekness for the purpose of inheriting the earth. They believe, as Christ has taught them, in the supremacy, and therefore in the ultimate victory, of goodness—that love is stronger than hate.

It is not for white men to preach this doctrine to the black ; coming from members of the dominant race exhortations to meekness sound like asking them to be servile, and in the absence of just dealing are no more than nauseous hypocrisy. When their own leaders, who know by bitter experience how hard is the road and yet tread it joyously, exhort them to show this large-heartedness, it takes on a very different complexion.

Aggrey saw here one of the great contributions that

Africans will make to humanity. "I believe," he was wont to say, "that the Negro has a great gift for the world: the gift of the idea of meeting injustice and ostracism and oppression by sunny light-hearted love and work. I believe he is going to teach that to Asia and the white folk."

There are elements in the African's nature which supply a splendid basis for Christianity. I wonder sometimes whether it will not be the Negro who will one day show to the world what Christianity really is. Certainly a people who can work and endure and laugh will win through in the long run.

This was one element in Aggrey's message to his own people. He never, it should be said distinctly, closed his eyes to their infirmities and limitations. When addressing Europeans he naturally said all he could say in the African's favour; but when talking to Africans he quite frankly pointed out their faults. Again and again he dwelt upon the truth that if they wish to take a position among the nations they must fit themselves for it. "When the high people mistreat you," he would say, "feel indignant, but remember the reason why white people look down upon us is that 95 per cent. of them are educated and cultured. Out of five million black people in South Africa, how many have the B.A.? You can count them on one hand. God helping me, I am going to give my life to my people, and tell them to stop talking and go and do something: to be not only consumers, but producers." "Love and work" was his motto. "His skin may be black," said a Transkeian headman who had listened to Aggrey's address to the Bunga at Umtata,* "but he has a heart like a white man; he could talk of nothing but work, work, work!"

Being an African, Aggrey naturally threw much of his teaching into parabolic form: he knew the appeal a story makes to his people. Whenever his colleagues on the Education Commission saw Natives coming away from Aggrey's meeting, waving their arms wildly and laughing

* See page 178.

uproariously, they would smile and say: "The Eagle again!" He repeated this story hundreds of times: it contains a real message.

A certain man went through a forest seeking any bird of interest he might find. He caught a young eagle, brought it home, and put it among his fowls and ducks and turkeys, and gave it chickens' food to eat, even though it was an eagle, the king of birds.

Five years later a naturalist came to see him, and after passing through his garden, said: "That bird is an eagle, not a chicken." "Yes," said its owner, "but I have trained it to be a chicken. It is no longer an eagle, it is a chicken, even though it measures fifteen feet from tip to tip of its wings." "No," said the naturalist, "it is an eagle still: it has the heart of an eagle, and I will make it soar high up to the heavens." "No," said its owner, "it is now a chicken, and it will never fly."

They agreed to test it. The naturalist picked up the eagle, held it up, and said with great intensity: "Eagle, thou art an *eagle*, thou dost belong to the sky and not to this earth; stretch forth thy wings and fly!"

The eagle turned this way and that, and then, looking down, saw the chickens eating their food, and down he jumped.

The owner said: "I told you it was a chicken." "No," said the naturalist, "it is an eagle. Give it another chance to-morrow." So the next day he took it to the top of the house and said: "Eagle, thou art an eagle; stretch forth thy wings and fly." But again the eagle, seeing the chickens feeding, jumped down and fed with them.

Then the owner said: "I told you it was a chicken." "No," asserted the naturalist, "it is an eagle, and it still has the heart of an eagle; only give it one more chance, and I will make it fly to-morrow."

The next morning he rose early and took the eagle outside the city, away from the houses, to the foot of a high mountain. The sun was just rising, gilding the top of the mountain with gold, and every crag was glistening in the joy of that beautiful morning.

He picked up the eagle and said to it: "Eagle, thou art an eagle; thou dost belong to the sky and not to this earth; stretch forth thy wings and fly!"

> The eagle looked around and trembled as if new life were coming to it; but it did not fly. The naturalist then made it look straight at the sun. Suddenly it stretched out its wings and with the screech of an eagle it mounted up higher and higher and never returned. It was an eagle, though it had been kept and tamed as a chicken!

When with great dramatic power Aggrey had told this story, he would say: "My people of Africa, we were created in the image of God, but men have made us think that we are chickens, and we still think we are; but we are eagles. Stretch forth your wings and fly! Don't be content with the food of chickens!" He would illustrate this by reference to polygamy and various other things that were keeping his people from soaring. Then, if there were missionaries or other white folk in his audience, he would turn to them and say: "Don't give us up if we don't fly at first. We are eagles, we will fly, only give us time and be patient."

Aggrey's path of ascent for his people was threefold: Christianity, education and agriculture. To those of us who divide life into water-tight compartments these appear to be three distinct and separate things; to Aggrey they appeared a unity. With no sense of incongruity he would pass from one to another in the course of an address or a sermon. I think that in adopting this attitude Aggrey was truly African. African society is a unity; religion and industry and such education as is given are so inextricably fused that the student of sociology finds it impossible to sort them out for separate description. Aggrey always insisted upon the inseparability of the three strands; and he often criticised missionaries because they tried to keep them distinct. For instance:

> The missionaries who came in the past to Africa meant well, but they preached the Gospel *and* the plough. Some dissociated work from religion. In the African mind there

is no such difference. The African believes that God is in everything. If a man is working and cuts himself with his axe we say that the previous night we went where he had no business to go and the God of the axe is punishing him. The air has God in it; the ground has God in it; the forest has God in it. God is everywhere. When a preacher says, " Oh, no, God is in heaven," we get to believe that God is somewhere far away.

To be true to African ideas religion must be co-extensive with life. The Church, the school, the farm and workshop represent one complete activity. We may, if we chose, regard " Education " as the all-inclusive term, but if we are correctly to describe Aggrey's attitude we must so define it as to embrace religion and industry. What is called " secular education " was utterly abhorrent to Aggrey. Education meant to him the full development of every part of the human personality.

" I wish no one could graduate in theology without agriculture," he said at Lovedale. " There are five parts of the human being. We used to say two : the soul and the body. To say body, mind and spirit does not go far enough. There is the *moral* part too. Some are spiritual in the narrow sense, intensely religious, and the moral is not there. There is a social part too, man is a social being. Some preachers preach and go home and don't care whether the people are hungry or not; they preach on ' set your affections on things above,' and then fuss because they don't get a good collection. I hope every teacher and preacher will know something about agriculture."

In his lectures on Education Aggrey used to criticise various proposed aims—the bread and butter aim, the " knowledge for knowledge sake " aim, the culture aim, etc.—and decide in favour of " the development of the socially efficient individual " as the ultimate aim of education, including all others and interpreting them in terms of efficiency, service and progress. " By education," he said, " I do not mean simply learning. I mean the training in mind, in morals and in hand that helps to make one socially efficient. Not simply the three R's, but the three H's : the head, the hand and the heart." He wanted this

all-round training for girls as well as boys : " No race or people can rise half-slave, half-free. The surest way to keep a people down is to educate the men and neglect the women. If you educate a man you simply educate an individual, but if you educate a woman you educate a family."

In framing an educational policy, therefore, Aggrey looked past the individual to the community. Education was for him distinctly an instrument for raising society to a higher moral level. " We shall make moral character the clear and conscious aim of education and direct all activities of the school to its attainment." The loftiest ideals shone out in his addresses to teachers. He would say to them : " We go to help God re-create a new heaven and a new earth. It is a glorious call—a man's job. It cannot fail ; it must not fail ; it is God's work. His resources are at our disposal."

It should be insisted that the community of Aggrey's dreams was to be essentially African. He desired that his people should absorb all that was best in Western culture, but " Let Africans remain good Africans, and not become a poor imitation of Europeans," he said. He often denounced educated Africans who, having made a position for themselves, refuse to identify themselves with and help their fellows. He used to make great play with the reply of a Negro who said when asked whether he was going back to work for his own folk : " No, I ain't never lost nothing down there." He blamed missionaries for requiring Africans to surrender valuable elements in their indigenous culture. " Too often the African was taught that everything African was heathen, wrong, ungodly. Our very names were designated as pagan and we were given European or American names. Our dances were all tabooed, our games stopped, our customs discarded, and all that was best in our systems was forgotten, with baneful results."

He became a strong advocate of the vernacular in education. " When is the vernacular to be used ? My answer is, from the very beginning." He suggested that

in reforming the educational system on the Gold Coast, " it shall be peremptorily laid down that throughout the course from standard i to standards iv and v no teacher shall be heard to utter a word of English " except when giving a lesson in English.

It is interesting to watch the development of Aggrey's mind in this regard. His own training had been of a rather narrow scholastic type and conducted through the medium of English. As a lad on the Gold Coast he studied books—except for printing, which was dignified by its literary associations, he did nothing with his hands. At Livingstone College, as we have seen, Greek and Latin were the main subjects of study. It is true, of course, that Aggrey's religion was a vital one ; but there were sides of his personality that were completely neglected in his formal training. Had no change come over his outlook he must have remained to the end a consistent exponent of a scholastic education.

Of the factors in the undoubted broadening of his views I should place first his contact with the rustic Negroes of North Carolina. His experiences at Miller's Chapel and Sandy Ridge opened his eyes to the real value of agriculture. There he first learned to mingle religion and industry in his teaching.

It must also be remembered that during his sojourn in America a great controversy raged among the Negro leaders and their friends as to educational methods. There were two strongly opposed parties. One aimed at copying the white schools and colleges : Greek and Latin were the avenues to culture. The other party, led by General Armstrong and his pupil, Booker Washington, saw plainly that to uplift the Negroes from the abyss into which slavery had plunged them an all-round training for life was a necessity. They had no objection to scholastic and professional training for the few who were capable of profiting by it ; but for the great majority they laid the emphasis on the industrial, the agricultural, and the general adaptation of education to the special needs of the people. Their interest was to have schools related to

the social conditions and social forces essential to the life of the individual and the community. It was out of this idea that the great Institutes at Hampton and Tuskegee grew. These were severely condemned by the scholastic group as tending to keep the Negro in the position of subservient manual labourers.

Aggrey's own training linked him to one party ; his experiences and common-sense enabled him to appreciate the aims of the other. How far he came under the direct influence of Booker Washington is doubtful ; but without question he was deeply impressed by what he saw at Tuskegee—he wished for similar institutions to be built in Africa. He was, of course, very largely influenced by his friend, Dr. Jesse Jones, who followed in the main the Armstrong-Washington ideals, and by his teachers at Columbia. In his own mind he achieved a synthesis, as, in fact, other Negro leaders have done. He never ceased to advocate and practise a " literary education," but, as we shall observe in later chapters, he threw his whole weight into the scales in favour of an all-round education for his people and placed tremendous emphasis on agriculture.

It is illuminating in this connection to cite the testimony of Dr. J. B. Danquah, solicitor and advocate, author of *Akan Laws and Customs* and *Cases in Akan Law*, who, as he says, was " one of Aggrey's warmest adherents and admirers." When the Education Commission visited Kibbi, on the Gold Coast, Mr. Danquah was acting as secretary of his brother, Nana (now Sir) Ofori Atta. He sought Aggrey's advice as to studying law in England. To his amazement Aggrey told him to stay at home and rear pigs and poultry ! It was wrong, Aggrey thought, for all the best brains in the country to be devoted to the legal profession ; they should develop useful industries that would be to the benefit of the country as a whole. Mr. Danquah did not take this advice ; he went to England and studied law ; " but," says he, " never for a moment have I forgotten Aggrey's advice. It is my pet ambition to keep a poultry-raising establishment and,

please God, Aggrey's desire may one day come to fruition."

It is from the same point of view that we must judge certain of Aggrey's activities that perplexed some of his friends. For some years he was engaged in negotiations for the establishment of a commercial company, to be financed by American capitalists, for the development of agriculture, and particularly for the sale of cocoa, on the Gold Coast. There is even a suggestion that he was prepared, if the company proved successful, to leave his work in Achimota and devote all his energies to it. We may be thankful that the scheme did not so far develop as to warrant the carrying out of this suggestion—Aggrey's genius was not commercial. He was intensely concerned for the advancement of his people, and was convinced that no country can advance without commerce.

The whole matter can be summed up in a sentence: "I want all my people to be educated in the larger sense, in heart, hand and head, and thus render Africa indispensable in spiritual, intellectual and commercial products to the world."

CHAPTER X

THE FIRST COMMISSION

IN her will, dated 1909, Miss Caroline Phelps Stokes bequeathed her fortune, amounting to almost a million dollars, to Trustees, with the instruction that the income be used, *inter alia*, " for the education of Negroes, both in Africa and the United States, North American Indians and needy and deserving white students." The Trustees of the Phelps-Stokes Fund, of which Dr. Anson Phelps Stokes was Chairman, rightly considered that they would worthily carry out the Founder's wishes if they devoted part of the income to research into the actual conditions and needs of education among Negroes. One of their first enterprises was a survey of Negro education in the United States. This was conducted in 1913 and 1914 by Dr. Jesse Jones, who, after eight years of service at Hampton Institute, had spent two years (1910-12) at the U.S. Census Bureau in charge of Negro statistics and in 1913 entered the U.S. Bureau of Education. His survey was a notable piece of research. It led him ultimately to Africa. At the close of the world war, the friends of Africa realised that the continent was bound to take a much more prominent position in world affairs than ever before. Some of the missionary societies were convinced that the time was come for a thorough overhauling of their educational work in order to ascertain whether their methods were the best adapted for the new conditions. This conviction found expression at a meeting of the Board of the American Baptist Foreign Missionary Society, held at Boston early in 1919. Dr. Paul Monroe, of Columbia University, who was a member of that Board, advised it to enlist the service of Dr. Jesse

Jones, to do for its schools what he had done for Negro schools in the States. The suggestion thus thrown out broadened until it included all the schools in Africa, mission and Government schools, American and European. The Phelps-Stokes Trustees were approached and in November, 1919, agreed to undertake the survey provided the colonial Governments would co-operate and the missionary societies would share in the expense. Ultimately the Fund contributed about 75 per cent. of the total cost.

Dr. Jesse Jones decided that Aggrey should be a member of the Commission of which he was appointed Chairman. This was because of Aggrey's African origin, his marked ability as an observer, his broad training in sociology and education, and his constructive attitude towards the perplexing problems of racial relations. The two men had often talked about Africa. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that Aggrey did the talking—Dr. Jones, at first anyhow, listened with passive interest. He confesses that his interest in Africa was lukewarm; Aggrey fired his enthusiasm. To his dismay he found that when he consulted friends and mission boards as to taking Aggrey on the Commission, some questioned the advisability of it, and others vigorously opposed. "What can a black man tell you that white missionaries cannot tell you better?" he was asked. It was feared that Aggrey's presence would cause embarrassment on the ships, in the hotels and in negotiations with Governments.

Then Mr. Oldham, the sagacious secretary of the International Missionary Council, arrived in Washington, and Dr. Jones summoned Aggrey by telegraph from Salisbury to meet him. Aggrey came, having travelled all night, sitting up in an uncomfortable compartment, since, being a black man, he was denied a sleeping berth. Dr. Jones had planned to be present, but was called away at the beginning of the interview. Mr. Oldham had not previously met Aggrey. He soon saw that he was a big man—and unembittered by such experiences as the one

he had just passed through. That evening, when Dr. Jones and Mr. Oldham met again, Dr. Jones was so anxious as to the result of the interview, that he could not put a question, but waited in trepidation for Mr. Oldham to speak. At last Mr. Oldham spoke: "Jones," he said, "I have seen some wonderful sights to-day. I have visited the White House, the Congressional Halls and the beautiful Congressional Library. But the most wonderful thing I have seen is Aggrey. By all means you must take him with you."

The formal invitation to join the Commission, and an intimation that he would be guaranteed pay at the rate of 1,500 dollars a year with travelling expenses, reached Aggrey in February, 1920, and he accepted it "wholeheartedly." "I want to be able to give my best services," he wrote to Dr. Jones. "The work is far-reaching and I am going to assist you with a whole heart and single."

Dr. Jones had taken Aggrey into his confidence from the time that the sending of the Commission had been suggested to him. From the first Aggrey was more than enthusiastic. It was not only the prospect of seeing his native land once again, but his imagination took fire as he pondered upon all that this Commission might mean to Africa. "It seems to me," he wrote to Dr. Jones in September, 1919, "that this is the psychological moment for Africa, and I believe you are destined metaphorically to stoop down and kiss the Sleeping Beauty Africa back into life from her centuries of sleep." Dr. Jones confesses that what Aggrey said seemed gross exaggeration to him; "they were to me the fantastic imaginations of an emotional African. Much as I believed in Aggrey, I could not share any of his forecasts." But he came to see that Aggrey was right. Looking back upon the stupendous results that followed the Commission, he wrote: "In answer to my own doubts and in acknowledgment of my error, I here record that Aggrey's dreams have come true with almost miraculous accuracy. Signs of the future indicate that they will continue in their realisation until

Aggrey's Africa will take its place among the continents of the world."

Aggrey plunged into a whirl of preparation. He wrote to friends on the Gold Coast urging them to co-operate with the coming Commission—to help in getting the facts, the real facts, in the case. He read voraciously every book on Africa he could lay hands on. In January, 1920, he paid his third visit to Tuskegee Institute, to attend a Farmers' Conference, but also to learn everything that would be useful in Africa. He had in 1906 represented Livingstone College at the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Institute and had talked with Booker Washington about establishing Tuskegees in Africa. Now, fourteen years later, the same thought was in his mind : " I return thinking what a great godsend a Tuskegee in Africa would be. Heaven hasten the day ! " He was enthusiastic about Professor Carver, the eminent Negro chemist who has won fame by abstracting hundreds of useful products from peanuts and sweet potatoes. "A man like him with ample facilities could work wonders in Africa. Five years in intensive service among rural folk have grown in me a special love for the soil and my eyes have been opened to the great opportunities in soils, in field and farm and forest. Verily my people are sleeping on acres of diamonds ! " Mr. Campbell, who had charge of the Movable School, showed him the very remarkable work he was doing in the rural districts of Alabama. " I asked a hundred questions from start to finish, even unto the probable cost per week of all items included. I have my note book filled several pages with information." To his delight, some of the extension work done from Tuskegee among the rural folk resembled the work he and Mr. Patterson had been doing for the previous five years in Rowan county.

The Trustees of Livingstone College granted Aggrey leave of absence. The announcement of his impending departure was made at Commencement in May and evoked a touching scene of emotion on the part of both professors and students.

To Miss Tourtellot *of the Phelps-Stokes Fund.*

Livingstone College,
May 12th, 1920.

The Trustees of the College have granted the leave of absence. They asked me purposely not to mention it to the students before Commencement. They were afraid the effect of the announcement might not make for a successful Commencement. On Commencement Day when all was over it was announced. I never can forget the scene. Professors who had not wept for twenty years broke down. Dr. E. Moore, who has been there since the day of the school's founding, started to speak but broke down. It was to them a thunderbolt out of a clear sky, even though I had been intimating to them that I might not be there next year. The students—oh, such a touching scene—with practically all [their] money spent, asked to be permitted to show their appreciation of my labours. I rose and insisted that I knew and was fully satisfied. But they would not hear. They were sorry they did not know an hour before. Some of the visiting alumni helped, and in less than five minutes presented me with over sixty dollars. The County teachers, some of whom were present, and whom I had assisted gratuitously to secure first grade certificates by meeting them and instructing them regularly, brought up sixteen dollars—wished they had time so they could have made it more. It is said the Commencement closed as with a funeral.

Aggrey sailed from New York as a first-class passenger on R.M.S. *Adriatic* on July 3rd, 1920. He was, it seems, the only Negro on board and was treated with every consideration. He came armed with a British passport, for he retained his status as a British subject, and was delighted to see the ease with which he was passed through the line of officials. " Rose," he wrote to his wife, " it is great to be a British subject."

On board Aggrey had leisure to reflect on the responsibilities of his position. He wrote to his wife about a conversation he had had with Dr. Jones on the way to the docks.

To Mrs. Aggrey. R.M.S. *Adriatic.*
July 4th, 1920.

Dr. Jones told me that my mission is to stand between the Natives of Africa and the Whites of the world—what a

responsibility! I am to interpret the soul, the longings, the wishes, the desires and the possibilities of the Negroes to the White Governments. I am to get all the truth and act as mediator between the two. . . . I am to get into the soul of the Natives and help the governments to evolve great things for our people. Salisbury used to be a real mean place. Policemen knocked Dr. Goler down and Lawyer Clement who defended him would have been run out had he not been an aristocrat. Now Salisbury leads in her treatment of the Negroes. They say I am partly responsible for this change, and I am to do the same on a larger scale for 200,000,000 Natives with the governments of the world. . . . I will stop here and meditate some. 'Tis Sabbath and at eventide, and the thought I am working out is that one of the significant characteristics of a Christian is that he does more than he is commanded to, especially in case of irksome duties. I am differentiating between this and works of supererogation which seem against this thought. I can bear witness that turning the right cheek wins ultimately. Rightly does Shakespeare make the critical Iago—Shakespeare's consummate Satan—the critic of critics, pay sweet-souled Desdemona this most excellent tribute: "She hold it a vice in her goodness not to do more than is requested" . . . I go forth, Rose, first to serve my God, our God Who has appeared to me by the side of the mountain and asked me to go lead my people away from the Egypt of ignorance and maltreatment. Moses stayed 40, I stayed over 20 [years]. Moses married in the land of his sojourn, I too did the same. I go to serve my people. I go, too, so as to make things better, life more worth while to you and the children. But for you and the children I would not care to return. Pray for me, that I may make good and make more than good. 'Tis your love and devotion that urge me on.

In London, Aggrey spent much time in reading in the Library at the Church Missionary House. "I am studying Islam," he wrote to his wife, "and the contest (not conflict) between Islam and Christianity." He met Members of Parliament and Bishops, preached at Rye, where the Mayor entertained him, and spoke at various meetings. On August 5th he and Dr. Jones had an interview with Brigadier-General F. G. Guggisberg, the Governor

of the Gold Coast. This was Aggrey's first meeting with him and seeds were that day planted which sprouted to good purpose later.

Dr. Jones and Mr. Roy, Chairman and Secretary of the Commission, had followed Aggrey to England, and the three men embarked on August 24th on s.s. *Abinsi* at Liverpool. On September 4th they reached Freetown, Sierra Leone, their first port of call, where they were joined by Dr. Hollenbeck, another member of the Commission.

Now this book is a biography of Aggrey and not a history of the Commission. For details of the work done and of the conclusions reached, readers may refer to the Report, *Education in Africa*. We only touch here upon the activities of the Commission in so far as Aggrey is concerned and in order to illustrate his attitude towards affairs.

The purpose of the Commission being primarily to report on education, the first duty of the members was to visit and examine the schools. All along their route they found many excellent institutions conducted by missionaries in most instances, and others by the Governments. In other places the missionaries were struggling heroically against almost insuperable difficulties and sadly hampered by lack of funds, to bring the light of knowledge into the lives of the Africans. Needless to say, the Commission found much that was not ideal in the equipment and in methods of teaching. One grave fault, almost everywhere apparent, was that the pupils were treated like empty jars to be filled with Western learning, with not sufficient consideration for the immediate practical use of the learning in relation to the actual needs of the community. The absorption of the schools in literary subjects, to the exclusion largely of agriculture, of hygiene, of handicraft, struck Aggrey and other members

very forcibly. The relative absence of girls was another feature that impressed Aggrey particularly.

The Commissioners asked the pupils: "What do you learn?" and generally the answer was: "English—arithmetic—writing." "What do you wish to be when you leave school?" The vast majority plumped for clerks. Asked for the occupation of their fathers, there came a perfect chorus: "Farmers." Strange! Were their fathers not good men and useful to the community? Could they continue even to live if every one became clerks, lawyers, or doctors, and none grew food?* Aggrey invariably asked the boys, and then the girls, to stand up—laying bare the comparative fewness of the latter. He talked to the girls about their mothers and home-life, the importance of women in the community. He would ask what songs the pupils sang, and usually would receive the reply: "The British Grenadiers—Rule Britannia—Coming through the Rye." They laughed when their own native songs were mentioned—oh, no! they were not things to be heard in school! Then Dr. Jones would sing them a Welsh song, and Aggrey a Fanti song; and they would talk to the pupils about the beauty and value of folk-songs and folk-lore. "Be proud of your own people and of everything that is good in your past," he would say. The children could often tell what happened in 1066, but of the history of their own country they knew nothing.

In Freetown a house had been prepared for the Commissioners; they had to employ Muhammadan servants, because the scholars from Protestant institutions declined to do household work.

They addressed the students of the famous Fourah Bay College, the Alma Mater of academic education in West Africa, where the curriculum included Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French, German and military science. In his speech Aggrey pleased them immensely by quoting Latin. Then he went on to talk of his own experiences in

* I take suggestions from an article by Dr. A. W. Wilkie, quoted in *Education in Africa*, p. xviii.

America, and led naturally to the importance of agriculture. He aroused enthusiasm as he expatiated on this—the students were afterwards eager to prove to him that they were the children of farmers.

After a visit to the schools in Freetown and at Moyamba, 75 miles inland, the Commissioners embarked on R.M.S. *Zaria*, which conveyed them to Liberia, where President King received them cordially. They left the Republic disappointed with what they saw of the schools. Since then Liberia has made great strides forward educationally.

On October 2nd they boarded s.s. *Appam* off Monrovia. Two days were spent in pleasant conference with Brigadier-General (now Sir) Gordon Guggisberg, Governor of the Gold Coast, who was on the ship, and with other passengers, officials and missionaries. On the morning of the 6th they arrived off Sekondi, one of the Gold Coast ports. After breakfast they were swung overboard in the mammy chair down into a surf boat which carried them ashore. Here the Commission was joined by the Rev. A. W. and Mrs. Wilkie, Scottish missionaries of long experience. Aggrey was assigned to one of the hotels for the night—an unattractive place conducted by Serbians, who were inclined to be inhospitable to an African. It was disconcerting to Aggrey to find that even in his own native land he had to suffer for his colour. The other Commissioners lodged at the Government Rest House.

The news of Aggrey's coming had been noised abroad, and next day, as they went by train on the twelve hours' journey to Kumasi, his relatives and friends were awaiting him at almost every stopping-place. From Kumasi Aggrey wrote to his wife:

To Mrs. Aggrey. Kumasi,
October 8th, 1920.

I must write in snatches while on the Gold Coast, because I could write a book every day if I had time. Volumes to tell. At Sekondi I saw the grown daughter, now the mother of two or three children, of my brother who died a few years

ago. She had heard so much of her uncle. She was dumbfounded with joy. Men and women held me in the streets and made me blush again and again. Yesterday I was thrilled. Every stop the train made there was somebody there who knew me—and the marvel of it was we did not know where we would land until the day before. This is Kumasi. I was here 24 or 25 years ago. Stayed only a week. What great changes! It is larger than Salisbury—plenty of automobiles, wide streets, not bithulithic but good. I am staying with a cousin of mine, a well-to-do native of Anamabu. The station master at Oponsu was a student of mine. My eldest living sister, Akyiniba, lives here. Although it was about 6 or 6.30 when I got here, I asked a distant relative who met me at the station with three others (Mr. Aggrey) to take me to her. She was not expecting me. We went in. Mr. Aggrey called for Akyiniba—she answered. " Here is your brother from America "—and you can guess the rest. She did not know whether to cry or shout. The neighbourhood was aroused. *Proud* is not the word to express her feelings. I can understand every word, but cannot speak as yet quite fluently. She came to my residence early this morning to see if she might cook my meals and send them here, but Mr. Ambaah, my cousin, says he is looking after that. She does not speak English. We talked an hour together—so you see I have not forgotten Fanti. A week more and I will be all right.

Less than a week later, after a swift tour in Ashanti, they were back at Sekondi. Again at almost every station somebody inquired for Aggrey. On the station at Sekondi they were accorded a public welcome by a group of Africans engaged in various professional and clerical occupations, all dressed as Europeans and speaking English. That evening a meeting of welcome was held in one of the churches. The audience belonged almost entirely to Aggrey's own tribe, the Fantis. He attempted to address them in their own tongue, but long disuse made this difficult and he lapsed into English.

The Commission was expected at Cape Coast the following evening, so early in the morning they boarded a coasting steamer expecting to leave at once. To their dismay they were told that the boat would not sail until

next day. Some of the members hastened ashore to find the captain. Expostulations and kindly appeals at last moved him and, making up for his neglect, he drove his ship as she had rarely been driven before. As night was descending, they came off Cape Coast. Crowds of people were observed lining the shore. It was dark when Aggrey and his colleagues were carried to land from the surf boats and found themselves among a dense mass of Africans. All the town was there. Protestant and Roman Catholic schools had sent all their pupils; these were singing, while bands were playing and the people were hurrahing. Chiefs and people united in an enthusiastic welcome to their distinguished compatriot. The other members counted for little or nothing that night. Aggrey was carried off to see his relatives. That evening an official dinner was given to the Commission at the Provincial Commissioner's bungalow. The company waited long for Aggrey and then went to table without him. Halfway through dinner Aggrey appeared, rather shy and like a naughty schoolboy standing at the door. "I'm very sorry," he said, "I couldn't help it. I had to go and see my mother before anything else."

From Cape Coast the Commission set off, with two motor cars and two trucks, for Accra, the capital, a distance of 125 miles. They planned to stop at Anamabu, Aggrey's birthplace, for a brief conference with Chief Amonu V, thinking it would mean no more than half-an-hour's delay. A quarter of a mile from the village the cars were halted and most mysteriously detained. Without explanation Aggrey was taken by people into a house near by. As time passed, and nothing happened, the other Commissioners began not unnaturally to feel irritated. Then suddenly a group appeared escorting Aggrey, who was gorgeously arrayed in full Fanti costume. It added much to his appearance: the lady of the party thought he looked most magnificent. The children of the Wesleyan schools came marching in full array with flags and all, and lined the road on both sides. The Commissioners started to walk between them, but each division

of pupils, as it was reached, commenced to sing "God save the King," and they had, of course, to stand right through the verse each time. Next appeared a brass band and the National Anthem was played and sung again. So with flags flying and to the tune of "Tipperary" they were marched to the Parade Ground beside the old fort, where a grand stand, covered with bunting and palm-leaves, was erected, and opposite it stood a great array of Chiefs with their followers and many huge ceremonial umbrellas. The whole community was gathered to give Aggrey a royal welcome to his father's home. The Asafo, or companies, gave a display of military manœuvring; men and women and children sang their native songs. Conducted to the grand stand the Commissioners were greeted by successive groups of Chiefs. Following this reception came the ceremony of installing Aggrey into the honourable office of Kyiame, held for many years by his father. He was presented with a beautiful ebony staff decorated with gold, as the insignia of office. The Paramount Chief presented golden gifts to the visitors and, all but Aggrey, they pursued their way to Accra, arriving there in rain and darkness. Aggrey remained behind to complete the festivity and to keep his birthday with his mother and friends. While wearing the Fanti costume, he discarded his helmet, and exposure to the sun brought on an illness.

In spite of his illness he preached four times on the Sunday. "I did not want to disappoint the public, so I told sickness to hold off a day, and Monday it returned with a vengeance." He did not fail to point a moral in a letter to one of his nephews who wished to be a lawyer. "I was sick two or three days in Cape Coast. The only native physician was sick himself. There were several lawyers I could have gotten—and four did come to see me—but not one doctor. I personally believe that we do not need any less lawyers, but we want more doctors. I did not hear of a dentist there. And the death-rate is fearful. If any of my nephews ever gets interested in education or medicine, write me and I will see what I can do."

DR. AGGREY INSTALLED AS KYIAME AT ANAMABU

Aggrey holds the staff of office in his right hand. By his side is seated Chief Amonu V

From Cape Coast Aggrey proceeded to Accra. On November 1st the Commission held a long conference with General Guggisberg and other principal officials. "Dr. Jones stated our findings," Aggrey wrote to a nephew, "and then they showered questions on your uncle. I felt like a fish in deep water—quite at home, for had I not spent years on the psychology and sociology of education? Gold Coast is destined [to come] up to the forefront of the Colonies."

That afternoon a public meeting was held in the Wesleyan Church for the purpose of enabling the Commissioners to expound their ideas to the people of Accra. Of this important event—important for its effect on Aggrey's future—we have fortunately a characteristic description written by himself.

To his nephew, ZEBRA WALKER.

Duala, French Cameroon,
December 24th, 1920.

At five was the big meeting held and all eyes were on your uncle. The Whites were anxious that I should place the case fairly, and my people were keenly anxious that I should not disappoint them. Hon. Bannerman, the barrister, introduced the Governor, who was to preside. The Governor made a splendid speech—a very excellent one—the best I have heard recently from any Governor. Then he sat down amid applause. The Wesley Church was overcrowded, every aisle space taken—nearly a thousand of the school children had to stand outside, could not get inside.* Hon. Bannerman introduced the Rev. [A. W.] Wilkie, who stated the case strongly for Great Britain and her interest in this great project. Dr. Jones followed with a fine speech which also caught the audience. Dr. Hollenbeck and Mr. Roy followed, making a good impression. The audience was waiting breathlessly for their brother. I heard one in the audience say, *Onsakyir kura* ("He has not changed at all"), referring to me. I turned back and said, *Oho, minsakyir kura* ["Right, I have not changed at all"]. They were delighted to know I still could speak the language. The Governor would not

* Sir Gordon Guggisberg told me that he feared the walls of the church would burst asunder, so great was the pressure!

allow Lawyer Bannerman to introduce me. He rose and said: "Mr. Bannerman, a black man introduced all the white men; now a white man must have the privilege of introducing the black man." He told the audience to listen to me. When I arose I was greeted with a veritable ovation. The tenseness of the situation—some twenty Government officials present, including Mrs. Guggisberg—and the large audience woke up all the fire within me. I felt that my people were all speaking through me. During the speech Mrs. Guggisberg said right out, "Why, that man is a great orator" while I had been compelled to pause through thunderous applause. I waited awhile and then caught the audience once more, and when I got through my peroration the whole audience was answering, "Yes! Yes!! Yes!!!" I sat down. Dr. Jones rose up and slapped me in congratulation. There were two more persons to speak after me, but the sensation was such that they did not speak. Thanks were voted, the National Anthem was sung, and we were dismissed. Men and women rushed to me, including Lawyer Renner and several others. We were due to go to the Governor's at 8 p.m. for dinner, and Dr. Jones and others just had to snatch me away into a waiting automobile; [we] rushed to our dwelling-place, then we put on our full dresses and motored to the Executive Mansion. The Governor had arranged for me to sit at his left, and he and I talked for over an hour and a half. After dinner Mrs. Guggisberg took hold of me and we discussed the education of the Gold Coast girls and women for fully an hour. The Governor and Mrs. Guggisberg are intensely interested in the education of our people, and I want all the Gold Coast to rally to their assistance. Governor and Mrs. Guggisberg sent me next morning their individual pictures.

In his interviews with the Governor Aggrey made a deep and lasting impression. Sir Gordon had at first been rather puzzled about him. That meeting and Aggrey's speech revealed both his abilities and his power to influence his people. There is no doubt, I think, that Aggrey's visits to the schools, and the warm welcome he received everywhere, showed him the great opportunity for service that was afforded by his native land and ripened his long-cherished desire to return thither. It

gave him great satisfaction to discover that three of his former pupils at Cape Coast were now Paramount Chiefs, while others were holding official positions and teacherships. In one of his talks with the Governor he said: "Do you think I ought to come and help my people?" "In what way?" the Governor replied. "In any way, sir, in any place where your Excellency is, I would come, for I am sure you would help me." No door opened to him at that time, but this conversation bore fruit later.

On November 4th the travellers departed from the Gold Coast in s.s. *Abinsi* and two days later entered the lagoon of Lagos and moored to the wharf. Aggrey was the guest of Mr. Peter Thomas, a wealthy African merchant. With his colleagues he inspected schools, finding the usual preoccupation with literary instruction; and attended a reception given by the Native Reform Club—about which there was little that was distinctively African. The Commissioners lunched with the Governor, Sir Hugh Clifford, who was favourably impressed by Aggrey and expressed strong hopes that he would return to make his home on the West Coast.

Aggrey preached in overcrowded churches on the Sunday. Africans and Europeans from other congregations thronged the Wesleyan Church in Tinubu Square in the morning. "I yielded completely to the Spirit," he wrote to his wife, "and Mr. Thomas, with whom I am staying, imagined that he saw a halo around my head! Anyway, the Lord's power was visibly felt by all of us—lawyers, tradesmen, clerks, men and women, young and old, white and black." At the invitation of Bishop Melville Jones, he preached in the leading Anglican church that evening; it was the first time that a non-Anglican had done so. Aggrey marched in, all surpliced, with the choir. To his amusement he was asked whether the

lights on the pulpit were strong enough to enable him to read his sermon—as if he ever read a sermon! The church was crowded. The listeners will not readily forget those utterances; all Lagos was talking about them next day. "Your prayers are being answered," he wrote to his wife. "Continue to pray. Let us continue to be humble. God has great things in store for us."

The Commissioners left Lagos on November 11th, travelling by train in two special coaches assigned to them by the Governor. They went to many places, Ibadan, Oyo, Kano, Zaria, Kaduna. Everywhere great interest was shown in the presence of an African as a member of the party on equal terms with the rest. The Muhammadans in Kano were greatly taken with Aggrey and his speeches. At Zaria the train had hardly stopped when Gold Coast men discovered him; at Kaduna it was nearly midnight when they arrived, but even at that hour Gold Coast men came to welcome him. On the banks of the Niger the Commissioners had their first serious encounter with mosquitoes; they dived under their nets and could hear the beasts buzzing like bees in a hive. "At last we have arrived in Africa!" shouted Aggrey from his berth.

They travelled on R.M.S. *Valiant* down the Niger from Baro to Lokoja and on to Onitsha. Thence by motor lorry they went through the Ibo country to Ikot Ekpene and on to Aru Chuku, where Aggrey preached to a large congregation. Then down the Cross river to Calabar, where in the Presbyterian churches Aggrey preached to large audiences.

On December 12th the Commissioners left Calabar for the Cameroons, calling at Fernando Poo, where they narrowly escaped shipwreck. They spent a broiling hot Christmas day at Duala. Here they met M. Allegret of the Société des Missions Evangéliques de Paris, who was reorganising the missions which his society had taken over from the Germans subsequent to the Cameroons coming under French control. At Duala there was an independent Church composed largely of discontented Africans

who had deserted the Mission and formed a centre of politico-religious agitation. M. Allegret was eager to win over these folk, if not to the French Church, at least to a better feeling and to hearty co-operation. Aggrey met them several times and by his good sense, and tact, gained their confidence and did much to bring them to a more Christian frame of mind. Here, as elsewhere, the Africans recognised in him an elder brother—the realisation of their dreams of what an African could do and be.

After seeing the schools, the Commissioners (except the Wilkies, who from here returned to their work on the Gold Coast) departed on the French liner *Cap Ortegal* for Belgian Congo, and on January 1st landed at Boma. The Belgians rather boasted that Belgian Congo was not as other colonies in the matter of racial prejudice, but when the Governor invited the members of the Commission to *déjeuner*, to meet the leading citizens and officers, Aggrey was not included; so the white men faced alone the excellent food and the cordial fellowship. From Boma the Commission proceeded to Matadi. Drs. Jones and Hollenbeck then went by rail to Kimpesi to see the schools, leaving Aggrey and Roy behind to study conditions at the port. I am told that Aggrey had the unhappy experience of being refused admission to the hotels of Boma.

By the kind offices of the Governor a small river steamer was sent to convey the Commissioners from Boma to St. Paul da Loanda. No facilities for serving food were provided, so they ate out of tins, while the boat tossed about. During the night it stopped for repairs to the engines and drifted out of the reckoning. But all turned out well, and on January 27th they reached Loanda and were lodged comfortably in the Methodist Mission. From Loanda they sailed south to Lobito Bay. Here they separated. Dr. Jones and Mr. Roy proceeded to Cape Town in order to visit the schools of South Africa. Dr. Hollenbeck and Aggrey went inland to see the schools established by missionary societies in Angola. Dr. Hollenbeck had served in the country for ten years as

a missionary. By rail, by motor car, by bush cart, and on foot they travelled 1,050 miles together.

As the train passed through the mountains, Dr. Hollenbeck told Aggrey of the time when he had marched that way on foot, taking three weeks to do what they now traversed in twenty-four hours. " He laughed in his inimitable manner as he told of the slips and other hardships he had to undergo ere he made the trip—laughed as if it were all something to joke with. Of such stuff are the missionaries made." When they reached Dr. Hollenbeck's station Aggrey listened to his friend talking in Umbundu to an assembly. " I could not help but feel," he wrote, " that there is indeed a future for Africa, when such missionaries, of large calibre, are getting into the very heart of the Natives by feeling with them, thinking with them, through the medium of their own tongue. I understood then why he has made so many sacrifices in their behalf, why he is so thoroughly alive to their interests and works towards the day when they, too, may have life and have it more abundantly: he loves them." Nothing went more to Aggrey's heart as he travelled about Africa than the way in which white men, particularly missionaries, were seeking to understand and serve his people.

Aggrey watched with indignant eyes the treatment of the Natives of Angola by their Portuguese taskmasters. Here is one picture from the journal which he kept during this part of the tour:

> February 9th, 1921: We left this morning for Kamundungo of Bihe, a distance of 72 miles. The journey by auto takes you through a remarkable piece of country—no forest, no large or very tall trees, but a rolling country, well watered, and apparently fertile. It needs but the hand of a scientific farmer to make it yield an abundance of garden and field crops. . . . On, on, we sped, and Henry Ford, the best and universal car indeed for all purposes, was doing finely. Our mind was composing a panegyric to Henry as we approached River Kukema, when a sight [met our eyes] which soured my milk of ecstasy and snatched away my

dreams. Here were men, women and children, covering themselves with one hand to keep the cold away, and rushing to and fro under command, working the road. It was not the work at all, for Africans I know are used to working the roads, but these little boys and girls were all bony as if hunger were tugging successfully at their vitals. No singing here—these men and women with the hoe. If Millet had seen them, hungry, haggard, tottering, fearful, not only unhopeful but hopeless, he would have ruined his masterpiece and painted a more terrible, horrifying picture : the fire in the eye shut in darkness to the light, but burning doubtless downward, inward, soulward. He would paint them naked. No, not naked, but unclothed in rags of strips of skin or bark. But how could even Millet paint the swift Mercury that erstwhile could make forty miles a day running, now tottering under a load of dirt that one hand would have disdained to carry, not enough to start ? How paint the mother more naked than clad, a [strip of] bark to tie her baby to her as she too drags her sick and overburdened self—working a road eighteen to twenty feet wide that an auto runs over only once in a long, long while, and only bicycles and topoia bearers travel ? These must work on the road at least 28 days a year, but sometimes they work three months and more, and not only without payment, but must supply their own tools and feed themselves, or have food brought to them by their own people. The Chefe sends to the village for so many to work the road. If they are not forthcoming, his emissaries take the head of the village, tie him, tie the women and plunder the village, anything, everything, until the workers are forthcoming, yes, coming without a chance to till their soil, coming to work the road to the harsh commands of a bully ; or worse still, to feel the hippo whip on your back, be you old or young, man or woman or child—coming, leaving behind a whole year of starvation to face when you return to your own people. They are growing weaker and weaker. They have no spot they can call their own. This is the white man's country. I looked out of the car, smiled to them and said " Kalunga," their usual salutation. But they looked at me, stared at me with a stare that burnt into my very soul. The first time in my life I smiled at my brother, my sister, and he, she, smiled not back. He only stared—a solemn, appealing, questioning

stare. I turned my face, tried hard to keep back the welling tear. I couldn't. And the voice rang in my ears, " Carest thou not that we perish ? "

Next day at Kamundungo Aggrey stood up to address an audience in the church.

I talked patience, domestic virtue, simple honesty and thrift. They listened intently as Dr. Sanders interpreted. . . . Then I remembered what I had seen on the road the day before. . . . Then my voice began to quiver. Something was choking me. O Heavens ! Shall I preach of bravery, of standing for their rights ? That were sheer madness, sin, criminal, in me, for that at present means death and the swift hastening of the studied work of utter extermination of my people, which is already proceeding here and will continue unless Jehovah steps in, unless civilisation cries " Stop ! Stop ! " I talked about our two greatest friends, God—" Suku "—and the missionaries. Then I talked of Heaven and the streets of gold. Five years I had faced the same audience practically every Sunday. I had preached fifty-two Sundays in the year and not spent two hours in all those years on Heaven. I was preaching the Kingdom which is or should be within us. My heart had been delighted to see more than fifty houses bought or built and paid for. I had rejoiced to see better farms grow, chickens and hogs multiply, and lands increase in ownership by the thousands in acres, while bank accounts swelled, children were sent off to schools and their expenses paid, and modern conveniences introduced on the farms and in the country homes. I had thanked God that higher standards have taken place of low standards in domestic life, in business and church relations through our ministrations. Heaven would come as a matter of course to such people, in fact, had already begun ; but with these people, homeless, no chance to own one, with ownership in land out of the question, baffled and buffeted on every side except the side on which the missionaries are, even domestic virtues are practised only in fortitude. The only thing to do was to wind up by telling them to set their minds on things above where sorrows and sighing never enter, and where the poor in spirit and the meek, and they that follow the Lamb, shall shine as the morning when the day dawns and the shadows flee away.

They seemed encouraged, both the Natives and the missionaries, and they sang with meaning and faith, " Suku O ku tata," " God will take care of you."

Dr. Hollenbeck and Aggrey returned to Lobito Bay and thence proceeded by steamer to Cape Town.

CHAPTER XI

IN SOUTH AFRICA

AGGREY'S tour in South Africa was a remarkable incident in his career. One must confess that his own account of it, as related in his private letters, would appear more than tinged with exaggeration were it not amply substantiated by the sober judgments of such level-headed men as Principal Henderson, of Lovedale, Dr. C. T. Loram, a member of the permanent Commission on Native Affairs, and Mr. J. D. Rheinallt Jones, Registrar of Johannesburg University. " Dr. Aggrey," wrote Mr. Jones, " has been responsible for really remarkable work in the creation of a better spirit amongst the radical Natives. There is universal testimony to the excellent effects of his genial capabilities and his wide and practical experience of similar race problems." Nor were the effects ephemeral. As one result of his visits and that of Dr. Jessè Jones to Johannesburg, a Joint Council of Europeans and Africans (on the model of the Inter-racial Councils of the United States) was established to bring together white men and black for an utterly frank discussion of the problems and for common action in regard to them. Native Welfare Societies, founded by the late Mr. Maurice Evans and Dr. Loram, had been in existence for some time, but these had consisted of white people with natives invited on occasion. Aggrey stressed the importance of giving Africans a *right* to join the Society and attend meetings. He urged that a special effort should be made to get the radical Natives to join. Eighteen of these Councils have since then been set up in various towns and cities of South Africa. The work they have done in carrying out Aggrey's great principle

of Co-operation is invaluable. More and more they are helping to shape public opinion on the right relations between White and Black, and to secure better housing, wages, recreation, and improved living conditions generally, for the Natives in areas where the Councils function.

On landing at Cape Town Aggrey descended into an arena where the racial conflict is more acute than in any other part of the world. "I sailed into the thick of it after much prayer," he said. It would be sheer impudence for a casual visitor, unequipped by actual knowledge gained through life-long experience of the situation, to address himself to a solution of South Africa's intricate problems. Aggrey, with consummate tact, refrained from public discussion of political aspects of the question. Strongly urged in some quarters to take sides in the great quarrel he consistently refused. He proclaimed great and irrefutable principles. He was always scrupulously fair in speaking of the white people, resolutely but sanely just in stating the case for the blacks. He refused to pit one race against the other, and laboured to bring about a better feeling between them. Co-operation for the highest and best ends: such was the burthen of his message. Eloquent and telling as were his addresses, he was himself his best argument. The impact of his attractive personality did more than anything else to achieve success.

Mr. D. D. T. Jabavu, lecturer at the South African Native College, Fort Hare, wrote of him:

> I was privileged to be closely associated with him in part of his travels in my district and thus was enabled to study at first hand his captivating personality and his versatility as a public speaker. He gave addresses, each of a distinct stamp to suit the occasion, all strictly practical, never nebulous but always to the point. He excelled in the art of concentrating his thought on one specific topic, finally gathering up his argument, getting it home to the hearts and minds of his listeners with Quintilian effect. His method of extempore speech without the slightest note-paper for reference invested his discourse with a genuineness that astonished his audiences, compelling their admiration. Without doubt he

has done more than any other visitor I know of, in the brief space of time, to persuade people in our circumstances of the necessities of racial co-operation between white and black.

It was not generally known that Aggrey was a British subject and his visit awakened apprehensions in the minds of the South African authorities who were aware of the subversive influences exercised by certain Negroes from across the Atlantic. Suspicions soon gave way to confidence, and it was recognised that Aggrey could do for South Africa what Booker Washington had done for the Southern States—teach each race to respect the other. During his short visit he delivered 120 addresses, with the goodwill of the authorities. It had been planned that Dr. Hollenbeck and he should, after inspecting various educational institutions, join Dr. Jones on the Congo and travel onwards with him. But when Aggrey had completed the arrangements originally made, pressure was brought upon him to remain longer within the Union. The best proof of his acceptability was the offer made to him of a professorship at Fort Hare, with the understanding that he should spend part of his time in travelling from place to place for the purpose of promoting co-operation between the races.

On his arrival at Cape Town, Aggrey, by request, called for an interview with the acting Premier and Minister of Native Affairs, the Right Hon. F. S. Malan, who welcomed him and expounded his views of the Native problem. Mr. E. Barrett, Secretary for Native Affairs, and Senator A. W. Roberts also discussed the subject with him. The Rev. A. J. Liebenberg, a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church, took charge of him and introduced him to other important people.

Aggrey soon came into contact with inter-racial prejudices.

To Mrs. Aggrey. Naauport Junction,
March 24th, 1921.

There is a peculiar situation here, more marked than anywhere else in the world. There are three sets of people in

South Africa: the Whites, the Coloured (meaning mixed folk), and the Natives. The prejudice against the Natives by the Coloured is as bad, if not worse than the prejudice of the unchanged Southerner toward the Negro. A Coloured person would not marry, would not be seen in the street walking with a Native; they [would] rather not have any Native in the Coloured Y.M.C.A. . . . Mr. Hartog, one of the two leading Coloured men in Cape Town, was asked to take me around. He came: took us from ten to twelve Sunday morning to see the slums. At one we had lunch together. . . . Mr. Hartog, Dr. Hollenbeck, another man —a white man—and myself went over to the place where the Natives are housed. The papers had it that I was to speak to the Coloured Y.M.C.A. So we rushed back to it at 5. The majority was Coloured—a few Natives there. I spoke and touched the colour question, but did it in a way that captivated all of them. I was given an ovation. . . . Dr. Gow asked me to preach for him at night at seven. We went over to the parsonage—Mr. Hartog, he and I—had a talk with Bishop Vernon, who was Registrar of the Treasury under [President] Taft, and then went over to the church. Bishop Vernon introduced me. But he had to say some more after I got through, and so did Dr. Gow. Again that evening I brought in the coloured question, showing them how much they are losing through the division. The impression seemed to have been very great. I was luncheoned and dined by the Coloured. They met me, they talked with me, and they wanted to give a public reception for me, but I had to leave Tuesday night. They promised to cast all that foolishness away, and see to it to co-operate with the Natives in their strides along lines of progress in all avenues. People have been talking and say nobody thought that could be done. Mr. Hartog gave all his time to take me around—all Sunday, all Monday, and all Tuesday. He and Bishop Vernon gave Dr. Hollenbeck and myself that most beautiful drive around the Table Mountain—known as the Victoria Drive. We went through Groote Schuur—the estate of Cecil Rhodes. He [Mr. Hartog] lives near him, and took us in to luncheon before we finished the most highly enjoyed drive. He and Bishop Vernon paid for the drive. He got the taxi and brought it to my boarding place, helped me to pack, to the astonishment of the Natives who were standing

there. He went with me to the station, and when the train was pulling away both Natives and Coloured were shaking hands with me on the same platform. I have laid plans for better co-operation, and I am going to keep in touch with them in order to keep the thing going.

It is now after 5 [a.m.] and I feel real jaded and tired. I would enjoy a very good sleep. This is Thursday morning. I think I am certain of one on Saturday night. I cannot write well nor coherently. All your prayers have followed me and helped me to make good.

The scribbled letter from which this extract is taken is unlike any other of Aggrey's that I have seen. It is the letter of a desperately tired man, written, or rather scrawled, in the early hours of a raw morning. Dr. Hollenbeck and he arrived at 2 a.m. at that bleak railway junction 4,800 feet above the sea and could secure no accommodation save a small waiting room, cold and bare. They had to wait until 6 a.m. for the train proceeding toward Lovedale, and Aggrey philosophically employed the time in writing letters and cards to his friends. He caught a severe chill.

They went on to Lovedale, the famous Institution that is associated with the name of Dr. James Stewart. Aggrey called it "The Hampton of Africa." Though he was far from well, he preached on the Sunday and during the week addressed meetings at King William's Town and East London. Native audiences, inside the Institution and outside, listened to him with very great eagerness. His main theme was the doing of Christianity, as contrasted with the talking about it—the application of it to all the practical issues of common African life, so as to combat degradation, disease, poverty, denominational jealousies, racial antipathy and lack of co-operation. It was exactly the message needed at that stage. We have already given an extract from one sermon (see page 87).

Dr. Hollenbeck and Aggrey spent a day at the South African Native College, Fort Hare, near Lovedale, saw what work was being done, addressed the students and met the Senatus. Mr. Alexander Kerr, the Principal,

thought Aggrey "a splendid fellow," and on March 31st wrote to Dr. Jesse Jones as follows:

> One wonders whether you are doing right in America in keeping this son of Africa on the other side of the Atlantic. . . . I hope that a way may be soon opened up for him to return to Africa and to do the work that he is seemingly so well qualified to undertake. He preaches a gospel of which our people here are sorely in need, the gospel that you yourself and those of us who are at work here see is the only one that will make any impression upon the situation, namely the co-operation of the two races in an endeavour to bring about the amelioration of conditions which are a disgrace to civilisation and to Christianity.

From Lovedale Aggrey went through to Natal. On April 7th, he addressed a great meeting in Durban. Next day, Mr. Leyman, head of the Native Affairs Department, and Mr. Chandley, one of the officials, drove him and Dr. Hollenbeck in a car round the city. Durban struck Aggrey as "really one of the most beautiful cities I have ever seen." They went to the Native location, which pleased Aggrey. "Here are," he wrote, "the best arrangements for housing coloured people by a municipality I have ever seen. Durban can give many a European and American city lessons in civic improvement."*

From Durban Aggrey and Dr. Hollenbeck went to visit Amanzimtoti Institute, the chief station of the American Zulu Mission, one of the oldest mission stations in Natal and the largest of its training institutions for teachers. It is beautifully situated, about twenty miles from Durban.

Aggrey addressed a conference of African preachers and teachers, the white members of the staff being present.

* It should be noted that these improvements have not cost the white ratepayers anything. The money is provided out of the profits of the sale of Kaffir beer, of which the city holds the monopoly.

He spoke for an hour; the audience would not break up and the meeting went on for another hour. That night and next morning other meetings followed; indeed, students and teachers attached themselves so closely to him that the visit was almost a continuous conference. They all insisted that he should return to live among them: Dr. Hollenbeck facetiously suggested that there might be war between Zulus and Fantis on the question, who should have Aggrey!

Dr. J. Dexter Taylor, who was present, tells that Aggrey spoke nine times. "Every one of his nine speeches was sparkling with stories and illustrations, yet he never used the same one twice. There were continual surprises of humour and pathos. In short, he was the perfect, unconscious orator. There were repeated and unconscious revelations too of the quality of the man himself, and these were the best and deepest of the impressions he made. He told of the twenty odd years he had spent in America. He asked the native boys and girls why they supposed he had put in so many years studying, and then answered his own question by saying, 'I am preparing for a professorship in heaven.' I am sure the thought got across to some as a rebuke to the time-serving superficial thought of their life-work. At one meeting we thought he was yielding to the racial spirit. He told the boys of some of his experiences on shipboard and elsewhere and ended each one by saying, 'I was mad clear through when I thought about it.' He was striking a responsive chord in the African heart, and we began to get worried, but when he had stirred them, he suddenly asked, 'Do you know what I was mad about? I was mad because my race, with all these resources that the white man has been finding in Africa, with all these things under their very feet, had not built any ships, or any trains, or any great buildings.' And then he stirred them to desire to do things to compel the white man's respect and to scorn the spirit which demands recognition before it is earned."

From Amanzimtoti Aggrey travelled by train to Johannesburg, that amazing mushroom city which is at

one and the same time both the focus of racial conflict in South Africa and the home of the most active branch of the Joint Council movement; the so-called University of Crime and one of the greatest centres of missionary activity in Africa. He was there joined by Dr. C. T. Loram, who wrote a vivid description of his experience.

DR. C. T. LORAM *to* DR. JESSE JONES. *April 16th*, 1921.

Aggrey is all that you described him, and more. I looked closely at his shoulders to see if the wings were growing! I have never met a more saintly man. Jones, that man has taught me more of Christ's humility than any other man. Now I see why the meek shall inherit the earth. I have felt the few snubs and colour restrictions imposed on him far more than he. "I smile," says Aggrey, "as I did at college, and say, This is a joke." Then again his culture is real and intrinsic. Surely he is the best answer to your opposition to the classics! His Latin and Greek have coloured his thinking, but he has still found time for sociology, economics and politics. As a speaker he is wonderful. He is at his best when he is heckled by blacks. Altogether a fine man, whom I should be glad to call my friend.

We had a European and Native combined meeting in Johannesburg. That excellent fellow, Mr. J. D. R. Jones, hired the hall for us and asked me to take the chair. There were about 150 Whites and 400 Blacks. I introduced the speakers. Mr. —— was sound but more than a little heavy. Aggrey was great. He screamed, he yelled, he argued, he almost wept. It was fine to see the effect on the people. The Europeans were delighted; the radical Natives were mad at the idea of a black man praising the Whites. Even Aggrey's "You'll catch more flies with molasses than with vinegar" failed to move them. There was a running fire of black criticism which Aggrey would not let me check. "All right, my black brother, you just wait till after this meeting" [he said], "I've got something to tell you about Marcus Garvey that I don't want these white folk to hear." It was a great show, and we were all pleased and proud.

Following this Aggrey addressed a meeting of the African radicals and told them of the Black Star Line and other failures of Marcus Garvey.

From Johannesburg Aggrey returned to Natal with Dr. Loram. He addressed students and teachers at Pietermaritzburg, Edendale, Marianhill and Ladysmith; and public meetings at Pietermaritzburg and Ladysmith. *The Natal Witness* interviewed him and said, "Dr. Aggrey presents in his own person the strongest possible argument in favour of the higher education of the Native that could be desired."

In this interview Aggrey pleaded, as usual, for mutual forbearance and for co-operation. "There are two sides of the question," he said. "Some white men do not understand or sympathise, and I plead for mutual forbearance from both peoples. Progress takes time, and I suggest that it would be best for a committee to be formed representing both races, which would meet and discuss any questions concerning dissatisfaction which may arise. This plan has been tried in America and has worked very well indeed. The energy stored in the native race is an enormous asset to South Africa, and it should be utilised by careful training and instruction on the right lines. If this were done, I am convinced that this country would become greater than ever. In the meantime let the white man be patient and not mistake native anxiety for unrest. . . . The British people are the ruling race of the world, but they must realise that their prestige and power carries with it responsibilities to their subject nations, which they must fulfil."

Dr. Loram writes as follows about his travels with Aggrey:

> The tours which Aggrey made through Natal and the Native Territories were full of incident and interest. There were great difficulties in arranging accommodation for him on the train and in the towns. In those days so-called "reserved" compartments for non-Europeans were not as common on the railways as they are to-day. However, the railway authorities were very good and Aggrey generally had a compartment to himself. He could not go into the dining saloon but had his meals served in his compartment. I noticed that the stewards did not much care at first to serve

him, but his modesty, courtesy, and perhaps the liberality of his tips, won their good will. His greatest trouble was that he could not get his bath regularly. Aggrey generally bathed twice a day, and often took his second bath late at night. He was almost faddy in his attention to hygiene—if one can be faddy in so important a matter. He ate sparingly, drank nothing but water or a little weak cocoa, and bathed and washed unceasingly. " You whites can afford to drink tea and coffee. Your people are used to it, but mine are not," he said. " A little tea or coffee which would not harm you would unfit me for my work."

We held dozens of meetings. Aggrey liked me to be on the platform and to introduce him. He adapted himself to his audience in a remarkable way. To children he was inspiring ; to Europeans humorous, conciliatory and deeply earnest ; to Natives graphic, eloquent, and vividly emotional. He had an abundant stock of stories to illustrate his points. His stories and aphorisms are recalled even to-day by Natives. " Don't you remember what Aggrey told us?," said a Native speaker in my hearing the other day, " Ask for what you want. Take what you get. Use what you've got to make them give you what you want." We usually visited the schools during the day and had the European meetings, to which Natives were admitted, in the evenings. Then, after the evening meeting, the Natives would take Aggrey away by themselves and have a meeting of their own. I regarded these as the most important meetings of all. Some of the more radical Natives felt that Aggrey was too much of the " good boy " when speaking to whites. They were surprised to find that he said the same things in their homes as he said in public meetings : " Be patient, don't lose heart, don't hate anybody, make yourselves worthy of good things and good things will come to you." Again and again I have seen him wrestling with the so-called agitators and persuading them by his logic, his wisdom, and I verily believe by his saintliness.

From Natal, Aggrey retraced his steps to the Transvaal and spent some time in Pretoria, Johannesburg and the surrounding district.

In Pretoria occurred one of those incidents that Aggrey loved to joke about. He had an important engagement

with Colonel Godley, the under-Secretary for Native Affairs. Attempting to board a tram, he was rudely kicked off. He looked at his watch : in twenty minutes he must be there ; it would never do to keep an important official waiting. He started to walk ; the sun was very hot ; he took off his coat and began to run. After running a mile, he looked at his watch again and saw that he could not possibly arrive punctually. So he hailed a taxi—and it cost five shillings. " This is where the joke comes in," said Aggrey, " when I charge my expenses to the Phelps-Stokes Fund—and that is a white man's fund—I shall have to put down five shillings where fourpence would have done if I had been allowed on the tram."

In Pretoria, Aggrey and Dr. Hollenbeck were the guests of the Rev. C. Bourquin of the Swiss Romande Mission. A reception was given in their honour, attended by about twenty persons, among whom was a member of the City Council.

In the evening of April 19th a great meeting was held in the Cinema Hall at Marabastad, the Native section of the city, under the auspices of the Pretoria Native Welfare Society. More than a thousand persons crowded the hall, the heat was intense, the atmosphere suffocating. Mr. Magatho, a Wesleyan local preacher and President of the Native Congress, occupied the chair and spoke with a good deal of heat against the Whites in general and the Government in particular. He talked in English, his speech being interpreted by two men, with great precision and rapidity, into Zulu and Suto. " In any other country," comments Mr. Bourquin, " he would have been arrested after a few phrases." The audience became excited, there was loud applause, and sometimes the clamour caused a shiver to pass through the twenty or so white people who were present. Dr. Hollenbeck spoke next and counselled patience, saying that bad as things were in the Transvaal they were infinitely worse in Angola —which, though true, was poor comfort to that audience. They listened with scarcely restrained wrath. Then Aggrey arose, and in a few minutes held them in the hollow of his

hand as he talked about his own life and the loyalty and patience of the Blacks. He uttered no condemnation of the Whites and pleaded that the Blacks should make themselves indispensable. " Many imagine that all Whites are bad," he said, " that you have not a single friend among them ; but I have found that you have more friends than you think." He besought Blacks and Whites to have patience—it would work miracles. " We Africans must, like infants, learn to stand before we can walk, and to walk before we can run." He insisted that Whites and Blacks have need of each other.

It reads tritely, but the manifest sincerity of this man, whose skin was as black as their own and who had suffered many things because of it, went to the hearts of that audience at Marabastad. The meeting lasted two hours ; Aggrey took half of the time, but after he had spoken five minutes nobody thought further of the heat and pestiferous atmosphere. Then from ten o'clock till past one Aggrey engaged in a discussion with fifteen of the African leaders. They undertook to change the tone of their newspaper and to do everything they could to collaborate with their white friends.

Next day the party motored out to Kilnerton to visit the Wesleyan school. Mr. Magatho, " the terrible demagogue," accompanied them. Aggrey addressed the students, bringing in his story of the eagle.

Mr. Bourquin concludes his account of these days by saying : " He ought to stay, not six weeks, but six years. What a fine work he could do ! "

We may here anticipate slightly.

Three years later, in June, 1924, in the course of their travels on the second Commission, Dr. Jesse Jones and Aggrey visited Johannesburg again. The Transvaal Missionary Association assembled to meet them. One evening a meeting was held, attended by many Africans

and a few Europeans, and Aggrey talked to them, without fatigue, for fully two hours. Since his previous visit, a serious strike had taken place on the mines and had developed into a revolutionary outbreak which had to be crushed by the military forces of the Union in March, 1922. Aggrey thanked the Native leaders for keeping their people quiet and obedient to the law during that revolt. "I am proud of my people," he said. "Win your enemies; conquer them by love; keep your friends. They who preach 'Africa for the Africans' are mad; if you stood alone you would soon be in deep darkness again. That which we have, and what we are, we owe to the missionaries. I was born a pagan and am not ashamed of it. But if the missionaries had not sought and found me I should to-day have, perhaps, a dozen wives, I should be making a beast of myself with palm wine; I should be a chief, honoured by my people, but I should know neither Shakespeare nor philosophy, nor the Gospel. We cannot at the same time pursue pleasures of the flesh and study. Be monogamists; that is how I have kept my intelligence clear. Neither Latin nor Greek can save us, nor even mathematics—only Jesus can do it."

At the close of this gathering, a man who had been conspicuous for his revolutionary sentiments, stood up and said: "Three years ago I hated you, Dr. Aggrey, because you proposed that we should collaborate with the Whites on a Council representing the two races. I have seen my error. To-day the seed you planted is become the tree you see, and in many South African towns the same associations are at work that you see here." It was very moving, says Mr. Bourquin, "those who were present at that meeting will never forget it."

We return to 1921.

So evident was the good service that Aggrey was rendering to South Africa that Dr. Henderson, of Lovedale,

and Dr. C. T. Loram conspired to prevent his rejoining the Commission in Belgian Congo, as Dr. Jesse Jones had planned, and to keep him a few weeks longer. Aggrey fell in with their scheme and set off for Lovedale again. On the way he stopped at Bloemfontein, where on May 3rd he addressed a large gathering of Africans in the location. The chair was taken by Mr. Cooke, the superintendent of the location, and both he and Dr. Loram addressed the assembly. Aggrey had been advised not to speak about the local land situation, which is a very acute grievance among the Free State Natives. He talked for about two hours, his address being interpreted into Xosa and Suto. "I accepted the counsel," he said afterwards with a smile, "and gave them a speech on the History, Philosophy and Psychology of Land Tenure. I said nothing about local conditions, but went at length into the relation of ownership of land to character values."

He was very severely heckled by the radical section of the audience, and for a time it seemed as if a free fight would take place. Aggrey saved the situation by undertaking to meet his opponents for a discussion afterwards.

Dr. Henderson had arranged a series of meetings in all the important centres of the Eastern Province and the Transkei. Hundreds and thousands of Africans flocked to hear Aggrey and received his message with trust and confidence. "I have rarely, if ever, seen a personality telling in such a remarkable way," wrote Dr. Henderson. As news of Aggrey spread, Europeans wished to hear him also, and special meetings were held for them. "The good he has done is incalculable," said Dr. Henderson again, "and is not merely temporary. There is a movement in this country, both on the part of the Natives and Europeans, towards a better understanding of each other and towards co-operation, and it has been Dr. Aggrey's opportunity and privilege to show the way and beckon both races to go forward."

At one meeting the Mayor told Aggrey that an important engagement would prevent his staying more than a few minutes after his opening remarks, but when

Aggrey had finished a two hours' address, his worship was still glued to his chair.

The most remarkable of these meetings were held in the Transkei, a region where Africans have been given a measure of self-government and manage their local affairs through a Council called the Bunga.

Aggrey was met by a number of Africans on his arrival at Umtata on Thursday morning, May 26th. Their first impressions of him were disappointing. They had expected a be-spectacled personage, with a great body and a deep voice; they saw an ordinary Native, humble, kindly, of ordinary size, and, as some said, ugly. He did not accord with their preconceptions of what a great man should be. They changed their opinions when they came to know him, and thought him the most handsome of men. We are fortunate in being able to see this incident in Aggrey's career through native eyes, for I have received several accounts of it written by Africans.

The Chief Magistrate, Mr. W. T. Welsh, had planned that Aggrey should address the Council next morning. So, on Friday, he sat in the Chamber by the side of his host, Dr. Hallward, the Dean of Umtata. The boys of St. John's Institution were there in force; the public gallery was crowded. The Chairman (Mr. Welsh) quietly went on with the business, apparently ignoring the distinguished visitor's presence, his thought being that Aggrey's message should come last so as to form the topic of conversation during the dinner hour. Aggrey spoke from twelve to one, and, to one African at least, it seemed like ten minutes. "In that time," writes this informant, "we laughed, we learnt; we gave up old prejudices, we admitted new grace into our hearts, and, indeed, were in a measure born again. A man who, after listening to an address from Aggrey, is the same as before, is either beyond redemption's cure or entirely wise."

On Friday evening Aggrey addressed a well-attended meeting of Europeans. Mr. W. A. Bennie, Chief Inspector for Native Education, declares that men who have specially studied the Native question for years agreed

that the problems of White and Black in South Africa were never more fairly put, as viewed from both sides, than that night by Dr. Aggrey.

Next morning Aggrey visited St. John's Institution and addressed the students. At noon there was a great gathering of between four and five thousand Africans on the market square, under the chairmanship of Mr. Welsh. Aggrey again made a deep impression by his speech.

On Sunday Aggrey went out to Qoqolweni, where he preached in the open to some fifteen hundred people. My African informant says that one would think that Aggrey must have exhausted himself by the previous addresses and that he would now be more or less commonplace. "But we knew nothing of Dr. Aggrey. What he did was to put aside the old book and take up an entirely new one. You speak of instruction! That is nothing. What we received was inspiration—the divine thoughts that filled our minds, the passion that fluttered within our breasts and seemed to lift us from the ground into the pure air; and we witnessed the ennobling of the common things of life. Dr. Aggrey's manner of delivery is winning and he seemed to lend a new meaning to old stories that we have repeated time and time again since childhood." Another African says that the sermon moved men to joy, and to admiration of the Christian life presented as a thing of beauty and power.

Aggrey preached that day on a favourite text: "And the Lord said to him, What is that in thine hand? And he said, A rod. And he said, Cast it on the ground" (Ex. iv, 2, 3). His thesis was that God has given something to every one of us, and we must use it. As always, he was practical in his application. "What have you in your hand? Your land. What use are you making of it? Why does it not grow more? The land that grows things for a white man will also grow things for a black man." Men went back to plough with new energy, and some to plough who had never ploughed before, after hearing Aggrey. One passage, I am told, created something like a sensation and was frequently repeated throughout the

country. Aggrey described in his own vivid way the sending of an angel to write " Mene, Mene," on the wall in Babylon at a certain hour and minute. The angel flew swiftly, and since he found body and limbs and right arm a hindrance, he gradually disposed of them to lighten his load and get there in time. It was as a head and a left arm that he arrived in Babylon ; only the left hand wrote on the wall ! " Oh ! " cried Aggrey, " that our leading men would divest themselves of pride, selfishness, love of gain, so as not to be found wanting in the day when they are weighed ! "

One prominent African, who, like other men, had come fifty miles to hear Aggrey that day, was well known for his obstinacy and love of contention. He was reputed to know the Bible by heart—" which mental process is not necessarily identical with assimilation," sagely comments my African informant. " I expected much from Aggrey," said this man, " and I am more than satisfied ; he is the first man to teach me something new ! " From his lips, it was a rare compliment.

After the service at Qoqolweni a Native Councillor dared to liken Aggrey's coming to that of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the Transkei—as in Palestine—people had expected an earthly deliverer who was coming to wage war, not against their wrongdoing, but against their conquerors and rulers. Dr. Aggrey has, said he, exhorted us to live peacefully with our neighbours, to work hard for our advancement, to make the best use of the help afforded us by our friends, black and white, to love those whom we consider our enemies.

A heathen woman came to Aggrey after the same service and said : " You have come to be our saviour." This was in gratitude for his earnest plea on behalf of the women.

My African informant well sums up Aggrey's message to his people : the co-operation of Black and White is essential ; the white man cannot keep the black in the mud without remaining there himself ; Blacks must cease to hate Whites—not all Whites are bad ; Blacks must

learn to help themselves and not distract their attentions by casting eyes overseas for salvation.

To understand the fervid reception accorded to Aggrey in the Transkei and the effectiveness of his speeches over, at least, many minds, it is necessary to remember that there, as elsewhere on the African continent, a number of the inhabitants was looking to America for redemption from their troubles. Aggrey was supposed by some to be the herald of an invading band of Negroes—they thought all Americans were Negroes—who would drive the Whites of South Africa into the sea. Men came to the meeting in Umtata on horseback, with empty sacks for saddle-cloths. He will order the merchants to sell their goods cheaply—he may even compel them to give the goods away for nothing! So they imagined. The empty grain bags under the saddles were to carry away these easily gotten possessions. These men rode away greatly disappointed from Umtata, wondering at the impudence of the person who had summoned them thither. A new Messiah indeed! One petty chief, a member of the Bunga, was asked for his opinion of Aggrey's address.

"I liked it," he said, "but he did not say what we expected."

"What is that?"

"The American government."

"Do you know what you mean by that?"

"No."

"You mean nothing less than war. Do you imagine that this country would give up its government without fighting?"

"Oh!"

"Yes."

"Well, I did not see it in that way. You are quite right."

This strange notion persisted, however. In 1926 a Zulu, who had failed to pass standard vi at school, but called himself *Doctor* Wellington, appeared in the Transkei pretending to be an American Negro. He told the

people that during the war England had been compelled to summon America to her assistance and, in return, had promised to give South Africa to America. But, in her usual perfidious fashion, she had broken her promise, and now America was about to send over a fleet of aeroplanes, drive out the British and Dutch and hand all South Africa over to the Natives. Aggrey, he declared, had indeed been sent as the herald to announce the glad tidings of salvation, but he had been bought by the Whites—that is why he had talked about co-operation with, and love for, their enemies. He, Dr. Wellington, had come to prepare the way for the American air fleets. . . . The movement started by this man spread widely. It might have caused more trouble than it did had not Aggrey's influence steadied the saner elements of the population.

At the end of May Aggrey returned to Lovedale. Some time before this there had been trouble at the Institution. The students had gone on strike; some destruction of property had followed. Teachers and students were out of harmony with one another and indeed with themselves. Aggrey was instrumental in bringing back concord into their midst. We have already quoted from an address which he delivered.*

On June 14th, Principal Henderson invited all the members of the Lovedale and Fort Hare Faculties to a reception in honour of their guest; fifty or more Europeans were present and twenty Africans. The African teachers afterwards presented an address to Aggrey and Dr. Henderson spoke appreciatively of the work he had accomplished. Aggrey wrote in the warmest terms of the kindness he had received at the hands of his hosts. Two days later he departed. Professor Jabavu accompanied him the eighty-eight miles to East London in a railway

* See p. 77.

compartment reserved for Africans. Aggrey parted with regret from this friend. He remembered always how Jabavu had lent him his thick greatcoat when he went into the colder climate of Umtata; and how, while he was Jabavu's guest at Lovedale, he had slipped into his room at night to lay an extra rug over his feet. Aggrey never forgot such things.

Friends had secured for him a two-berth cabin on R.M.S. *Kinfauns Castle*, and Aggrey embarked on her at East London on June 18th. This was at the height of the tourist season and strenuous efforts had to be made to secure him a passage. Aggrey sympathised with the shipping agents, knowing the criticism they would receive from the European passengers. With characteristic humour he wrote to a friend: "The boat was crowded but I had a table all to myself. The trouble was that I didn't want the steward to suffer and so had to tip for eight."

On the voyage, Aggrey added a note "strictly confidential" to a letter which he wrote to his wife. "Dr. Loram told me that the governing Council of the South African Native College unanimously voted and enthusiastically elected me Professor of Sociology and Education. And they are so anxious to have me they want me here next February, 1922!!! Now what do you think of that? Don't get excited—Professor! This is not formal. Dr. Loram is going to see the Acting Prime Minister, Mr. Malan, to get his consent in order to make the invitation formal."

Dr. Loram interviewed the authorities and was making the necessary arrangements when, as we shall relate in a subsequent chapter, Aggrey decided for Achimota rather than Fort Hare. It has been alleged that the Government of South Africa refused to give Aggrey permission to take up the proferred professorship. Dr. Loram assures me that there is no doubt that if Aggrey had accepted it the Government would have readily allowed him to enter the country.

There was much to meditate upon during the voyage

to England; the events of these past strenuous months; this offer of a professorship; the suggestion made to him that he should occupy a post at Fisk University in the United States; the position offered to him in Nigeria. "I had been feeling all along," he wrote to his wife, "a Child of Destiny, that something big was coming."

Arriving in England, Aggrey addressed the summer conference of the Student Christian Movement at Swanwick on July 22nd. The young men and women took to him amazingly. What was the secret of his attractiveness? I asked one who was there. "Well—it was just Aggrey."

Thereafter he went off to America, reaching Salisbury after being a year absent from his family.

CHAPTER XII

IN AMERICA

AFTER living a year of such throbbing interest and receiving such adulation, it required no little grace for Aggrey to step down from his pedestal and become a student again. Yet he did it, gladly and pluckily. With his final studies at Columbia University we have already dealt in Chapter VIII. We must now relate his other activities during the period that intervened between the two Education Commissions. At this time he became the interpreter of his race to the Americans. His travels as Commissioner and the fame of what he had accomplished in Africa brought his name before the leaders of various Christian organisations and they eagerly enlisted his services as a speaker at great assemblies. Travelling and speaking interfered considerably with his studies, but what he did was eminently worth doing. Africa was then an almost unknown land to Americans in general; Africans were largely misunderstood and in some quarters proportionately disesteemed. To a very large degree Aggrey succeeded in explaining both Africa and the Africans.

In October, 1921, he attended, as a co-opted member, the first meeting of the International Missionary Council. Representatives from many lands gathered at Mohonk Lake, in Ulster County, New York, for the purpose of completing the organisation of the Council and of discussing urgent missionary problems throughout the world. Aggrey was appointed to serve on two committees, one to consider questions relating to the Near East and work for Moslems, and the other to consider the relations of Church and Mission. He also took part in the general

discussions, and finally was appointed a member of the Council as newly organised. Aggrey roomed with Dr. Moton, of Tuskegee, and these two Negroes were the most interesting persons present. One of the most prominent missionary leaders told me that as he sat day by day opposite Aggrey, watched his face and listened to his contributions to the debates, he came to the conclusion that Aggrey's was almost the acutest mind in the assembly.

On October 20th he spoke at a Business Men's Luncheon in Boston, arranged by Dr. Patton, of the American Board of Foreign Missions. Four hundred influential men, all white, met in the City Club—Aggrey was the only Negro present. Eight speakers were given five minutes each. We may imagine what an ordeal this must have been to Aggrey—five minutes for Africa! He wrote to his wife: "I was called upon third, and I got up speaking with the steam up. The whole place seemed electrified. I found myself walking backward and forward on the rostrum. When I got through the ovation was tremendous. They kept [it] up so uproariously that I had to get up, step forward, and bow, two, three times. When the speaking was over dozens came to congratulate me."

Next month he was at New Haven, Connecticut, to address the Annual Meeting of the Women's Board of Missions. He was met at the station by two ladies and driven to the Center Church on the Green. When he rose to speak last at 9.30 p.m. on "Africa, the Black Man's Burden," the audience woke up; he concluded amid a storm of applause.

In the middle of November he was invited to speak at the National Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, attended by 1,200 delegates. A writer in *The Methodist* described him as "a born master of assemblies" and his speech as "the most astonishing speech of the whole convention." Dr. Diffendorfer, chairman of the programme committee, declared that Aggrey "completely captivated one of the greatest audiences ever as-

sembled in the Methodist Episcopal Church." For a long time, notwithstanding the strenuous efforts of Bishop Hartzell, the Methodists had remained largely irresponsive to the call of Africa. Much of the subsequent awakening can be traced to this meeting.

In January, 1922, the Foreign Missions Conference of North America held its twenty-ninth annual session at Atlantic City, New Jersey. There were present 325 delegates representing sixty-two Boards and Societies. Considerable time was devoted to the discussion of the rising tide of nationalism and its effect on the work of the Church in the foreign mission fields. On the 11th, Dr. Jesse Jones addressed the Conference on the educational needs of the peoples of Equatorial Africa and Aggrey followed his leader. Some passages from his address may be quoted here.

> I came purposely and especially to thank you all on behalf of Africa. We there are under heavy obligations for the work that the mission boards of all the world have done and are still doing. We are slow in paying that debt because you have not yet permitted us to do it in our best way. When you come to Africa you come with the idea that the black man has nothing to contribute; but if you will only give us a chance we will contribute something to the Kingdom of God, which perhaps you may be glad to gain from us, agreeing that your work has not been in vain. . . .
>
> During the war, one paper said that the best punishment that could be given to the Kaiser would be to arrest him, to bring him to America, and to take him down South and let him pass for a Negro. That gives you an idea of the state of mind of some people concerning the black man. . . .
>
> I prayed last week a strong prayer to God and He answered me. I had been speaking to some students at Columbia on sociology, and I said, "If you will give the black man a chance he will do you credit." A gentleman

said that the black man is unmoral. I replied : " If we are unmoral, we can do neither wrong nor right. That charge is untrue. If you will stand by us we will do what is right." Then I said : " If a coloured man commits an assault on a white woman, just put twelve black men on the jury ; and that black jury will in less than two minutes give a verdict of guilty." The very next day I heard of a case in Harlem, where one mulatto killed two detectives. It pained my heart, but I was proud when I heard that one hundred and sixty black people came and said, Give us a chance, we will help catch him. I prayed to God and said, " God, don't let any of the white detectives catch that boy. Make it that black people shall capture him, so that we can show to the world that we do not cloak our criminals, that we object to anything that is wrong, and that we stand for the law." The next day I found out that this criminal had been found in the room of a black man, and that the black man himself had gone and told a black preacher who told a black magistrate, who captured the criminal single-handed. We are going to show you that if you give us a man's chance we will bring our criminals to justice.

Give us a full-rounded chance.

The sea of difference between you and us should be no more. The sea of our failure to bring any contribution to the Kingdom of God shall be no more. You white folks may bring your gold, your great banks and your big buildings, your sanitation and other marvellous achievements to the manger, but that will not be enough. Let the Chinese and the Japanese and the Indians bring their frankincense of ceremony, but that will not be enough. We black people must step in with our myrrh of child-like faith. We do not worry about the immaculate conception, and all these technical details of criticism. We look for a Christ who loves all men, Who came to die for the salvation of the whole world ; we believe in God as a child believes. If you take our childlikeness, our love for God, our belief in humanity, our belief in God, and our love for you, whether you hate us or not, then the gifts will be complete—the gold and frankincense and myrrh.

God grant that you who have heard this report* and this plea from Africa will trust us, will come and educate us, and

* i.e. The Report of the Education Commission.

will give us a chance to make that contribution to the world which is in the design of God.

Early in March Aggrey went to Charlottesville, the seat of the University of Virginia, founded by Thomas Jefferson, to attend a conference of the Student Volunteer Union. Delegates from forty-five universities and colleges assembled in the Baptist Church, where he addressed them. "In honor of me," he wrote to Mrs. Aggrey, "coloured [men] were permitted to go and were seated to the front and to the right of the speaker. Whites sat to the rear of them, and being in overwhelming majority, occupied the bulk of the building's capacity." The students invited him to the university; and he and other coloured men were given front seats at a Pageant in the main auditorium. The students made much of him. This was all very significant.

A few days later Aggrey went on to Lexington, the town in Virginia that is best known as the seat of the Washington and Lee University—so named from George Washington, who contributed to its funds in 1798, and General Robert E. Lee, the famous commander of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia in the Civil War, and President of the University from 1865 till his death in 1870. "Stonewall" Jackson was a professor in the Virginia Military Institute, which is also situated at Lexington.

Aggrey was met at the station by a student of the University and by the Rev. Mr. Stennett, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, coloured, who was to be his host. He wrote the following account of his experience:

To his friend, Dr. Davenport. New York,
March 10th, 1922.

They came for me and took me over the Campus of Washington and Lee. I spoke to the students and one or two members of the faculty in the Lee Literary Society Hall. Had great time. All White churches asked to have me. So between 9.30 and 11 a.m. Sunday morning I spoke at the Presbyterian, Episcopal, Methodist and Baptist Sunday schools. Enthusiasm ran high. . . . At 11 o'clock I preached

to a union congregation of all the coloured churches at the M.E. church. It was the fifth time that day. . . . I had been praying and fasting and the prayers were abundantly answered. As I had to leave that night, all the white churches came together at the Presbyterian church in a special union meeting to hear me. Permission was given students of Washington and Lee University and the cadets of Virginia Military Institute also to be present, and they were there. The coloured [people] also wanted to come—and they too were well represented. The first time a man of colour had been thus entertained in the University or in the city—the home of the Lees, etc. I got up and started and the Lord helped me. They said my challenge was most remarkable. [In his peroration Aggrey called upon the spirits of the heroes, white and black, of Virginia " that bathes her dimpled feet in the early ocean tide of the Atlantic as Aurora, leaving the saffron head, begins to tip the hills with gold," to inspire the present generation to solve the racial problem.] I spoke without notes or manuscript. I was swept away as by a divine afflatus. When I sat down the impression was such as to drive me back to my knees in deepest gratitude. The Whites rushed to me and surrounded me —over thirty of them, men and women, asking to be introduced to me. Both White and Coloured asked if I were going to speak again at night. I said, No, I had to leave. They said they wanted me to return, and that if I would return they guarantee that no hall or church would be large enough to accommodate the audience that would want to hear me. Thence I was escorted to Washington and Lee again, where a special programme had been arranged by the Y.M.C.A. The seventh time that day I spoke for about twenty minutes to the students, members of the faculty from the University and Institute, and then cake and grape juice lemonade were served. A former professor of V.M.I. presented me with a book, writing on the flyleaf, " To Dr. J. E. Kwegyir Aggrey, a princely man, from the author." A special automobile was gotten by them to take me over to Buena Vista, a distance of ten miles—cost them four dollars—where I got train and sleeper arranged by them for New York.

In April, Aggrey paid a visit to Hartford and addressed an assembly of the students of the Kennedy School of

Missions, the School of Theology and the School of Religious Pedagogy. Dean Capen testifies that his address made a deep impression. At the beginning of May he preached in the chapel at Bryn Mawr College and the girl students kept him answering questions till a late hour that night. "I think your husband made a hit at Bryn Mawr," he wrote to Mrs. Aggrey. He took the last examinations for the second semester at Columbia on May 25th, and next day went to King's Mountain to speak at a Y.M.C.A. conference for Mr. Max Yergan, the American Negro who has since done such excellent work among the students in South Africa. He was kept there two days, after which he accompanied Mrs. Aggrey to Raleigh, where she received her M.A degree at Shaw University.

Then Aggrey paid his first visit to Canada to address meetings on behalf of the Congregational Missionary Society, whose stations he had seen in Angola. He spoke twice at Maxville, once in Montreal, six times in Brandford, six times in Toronto, and twice in Guelph.

Just before reaching Montreal, on the train from New York, the immigration officer, without asking for his credentials, told Aggrey that he would have to take him to the office in Montreal in order to satisfy the authorities that everything was in order. By some accident nobody was at the station to meet him. After being kept waiting for some time he was escorted to the office, struggling under the burden of a suit-case filled with heavy textbooks which he had brought to study during his spare moments. An important-looking gentleman, dressed in a suit trimmed with brass buttons and gold braid, and wearing a cap similarly adorned, glanced up from his papers and asked, "Who are you, and what are you doing in Canada?" Without speaking, Aggrey handed him an introductory letter addressed to the Churches by the Treasurer of the Missionary Society. The official read a few lines, and then asked, "Are you Dr. Aggrey?" Receiving an affirmative answer, he took off his cap and said: "I must apologise, Dr. Aggrey, for troubling you

in this way. I am very sorry indeed to have put you to this inconvenience." Aggrey thanked him, in his own gracious manner, and departed. Next day, he was walking along the street with two prominent citizens, when they chanced to meet this officer, who raised his hat and greeted Aggrey very cordially.

In September and October Aggrey made a second, and more extensive, tour in Canada. "I have had the time of my life," he wrote.

To Mrs. Aggrey. In the Train,
October 16th, 1922.

At Ottawa I was entertained by the Tyers—fine home, excellent people, who took me around to see the capital city. And they climaxed the whole thing with a reception that night to which some thirty or thirty-five of the élite were invited. At Granby I stayed with the well-to-do Fullers. At Sherbrooke Dr. Reid, chairman of the local ministerial Union, carried my heavy suit-case from the meeting-house to the station—about three blocks. At Ayer's Cliff I stayed with the Thomases, Welsh and very, very friendly. It was here his son slipped a hot-water bag into my bed to make it real warm. They gave me the fine ride by the two lakes—most picturesque scenery. Thence back to Montreal where Mr. Black and Mr. Moore of the Bell Telephone Co. entertained me. I stayed that night with Mr. Thompson, the coloured preacher. That's the only coloured home I have stayed or been in in all Canada. Here, too, Dr. Ritchie of McGill University entertained me late at night in his residence on the University grounds. At Kingston Rev. Brown was a veritable father—ordered me to bed to rest before the evening [meeting]. My best rest was writing to you. I did enjoy that kind of rest. At Coburg [I was] the guest of the Rotary Club and speaker, and again at night. Toronto next. Miss Effie Jamieson, the three sisters of them, a happy group of hostesses. At Hamilton stayed with the Cattels, returned missionaries from Angola. I spoke twice in Hamilton and left on the radial or inter-urban train (electric) for Brandford, where I had already spoken six times before. The meeting was quite a success, impromptu reception after the service—grand confab. until midnight. From Blandford to Stratford—I stayed with the Mackenzies. Thence to London, where

I was luncheoned at the Tecumseh by the two pastors. I stayed with Rev. and Mrs. Storey—fine couple. [He seems to have practised his mechanotherapy on them.] The three of us went to Forest to the meeting. I spoke there twice—took that fine auto trip by the waters of the Huron. Here I stayed with Rev. and Mrs. Murray, the pastor and wife. Lots of fun with the several ministerial delegates. We rode with Mrs. Morning Star to Watford. Here the International Limited stopped to pick me up for Winnipeg. . . .

An incident recounted by Mr. H. W. Baker may be interpolated here:

Watford is a flag-station for fast trains, and we found that unless we could induce the railway company to stop the Chicago Flyer passing the station at 10.10 p.m. Dr. Aggrey could not be in Winnipeg in time for the Sunday morning service. Arrangements were made through the District Superintendent in Toronto for this train to stop, but the superintendent, whom I knew well, remarked that the last time they stopped this train at Watford they ran over a cow, and this would not have happened if the train had gone straight through. I happened to be taking the service at the Watford Church on the Sunday preceding Dr. Aggrey's visit. I told the people what the superintendent had said about the cow and added that I looked to them to see that all cows were kept off the track next Thursday as I had promised the railway company this would be done. I was not there on Thursday evening, but it seems that twenty or thirty young people accompanied Dr. Aggrey to the station after his meeting. When the train pulled up and the conductor and porter alighted, Dr. Aggrey's escort was very greatly interested to see, in the glare of the conductor's lantern, the amused expression on the porter's face as he found that the only passenger to board the train was one of his own colour.

To resume Aggrey's narrative:

At Winnipeg Rev. Dickson, pastor of the Crescent Congregational Church, and Rev. George Laughton of the Central Congregational Church, both met me at the station. I was not hard to find—my complexion being significant. Mr. Dickson motored me to Mr. Rannard's palatial home in a most exclusive part of the big city. He received me gladly. I had not been there an hour when they said they felt special

interest in me. I had the guest room. [Here follows a description.] I am telling you all this to show you that only in the wealthiest homes did I find taste like yours. You are a jewel—do you know it? Now let me see you smile! Mr. Rannard is the leading shoe merchant in the city. He has read of the handicaps of the coloured people. He admired Booker T. Washington very much, but never saw him. He thinks my mission is as great as Booker T. Washington's —yea, even greater. He thanked me for my talk or discussion at the breakfast table—it would help his boys very much. Economics, sociology, religion, mission of the British Empire, racial self-help—" Heaven helps those who help themselves "—chromatics and the influence of different colours on the nerves, etc. We talked and talked and talked. When he heard me say that it is a mistake to carry Negroes or native Africans but best to help them to help themselves, he took to me and promised to help me in my work. [Follows a description of Mr. Rannard's going to his store on Sunday and getting Aggrey a fine pair of boots, which he sold him for two dollars: " the two dollars was self-help, the balance, eight or ten dollars or more, his appreciation."] He accompanied me—he has a large roomy car—to his church in the morning. A very missionary spirited church, supports a missionary all by itself. I met mission boards afterwards and great plans were put under way to more than double their portion for Africa. Mr. Rannard took us back home to dinner. He brought me back to Junior Sunday school which I addressed on missions. I addressed the Senior Sunday school—several of the juniors stayed for that —and again we had a glorious time. They think it wonderful that I could make so many speeches, each with different illustrations, and get everybody so highly enthused. The enthusiasm was such, the whole church and Sunday schools were set on fire. They said if I had stayed longer I would have had more people volunteering to go [to Africa] than I could locate. The Lord was with us. They say the city was stirred as never before by a speaker of my people. The McCormicks had their large car there to take me to their house. The Central Church is a great church—the Sunday schoolrooms were thrown into use. The galleries hold 1,500 —all seats taken before I started to speak. They had come from all over town. My theme was God's plan for the

British Empire in the Christianisation of Africa and the Africans. Central, I was told, is not a missionary church, but the impression must have been somewhat out of the ordinary. There were some ten coloured people there in the audience of nearly twenty-five hundred. They felt very proud. The rostrum was a good and broad one and the message had me. The audience laughed, roared, grew serious, and when I sat down after thirty minutes' sermon you could hear a pin drop. They crowded me by the hundred when I got through. I had to move fast to let all get to me. It was my last public speaking on the trip, and was certainly a climax.

The minister and officials of the Central Church invited Aggrey to supply the pulpit throughout August in the following year.

On the day that Aggrey returned to New York he addressed an important New York Club, by the arrangement of Dr. Jesse Jones. On October 19th he spoke at a meeting of the Women's Home and Foreign Missionary Society at the Central Presbyterian Church, Madison Avenue, New York. His subject was " The Negro in America and Africa."

At the beginning of the following year, 1923, we find him preaching in the First Congregational Church, Jersey City. In February he attended a conference of the Eastern Union of Student Volunteers held at Drew Forest, Madison. Aggrey was always happiest among students ; and students, in America as in England, took him joyously to their hearts. A room was reserved for him where men and women from Princeton and other Universities might interview him, one by one. A Dutch minister, Mr. Louw, from South Africa sought him out. At first he was hesitant, but very soon found himself, " and was so deeply touched by my attitude and answers to his questions," says Aggrey, " that he had to wipe his tears." Mr. Louw

stayed two hours: "No one has laid his hand as you have on the root of the whole race problem," he said to Aggrey, and promised to give him all the help he could in South Africa. Three coloured students followed and it was nearly 1 a.m. when they left. On the Sunday morning he met students interested in Nigeria; then at eleven preached to delegates and citizens at the First Methodist Church in Madison. Enthusiasm ran high. At two he talked to the delegation from Penn State College, and at 3.30 delivered the closing address of the conference. "Rose," he wrote to his wife, "I have never been more impressed than that afternoon. I had thirty minutes and it went like ten." In the morning service Aggrey had said that he wished Southerners were present. Afterwards a young woman came who said that she was from South Carolina, and that if he would preach that sermon in her State it would cause a revolution in favour of the Negro—nobody could resist the challenge. Another college girl introduced herself as the grandchild of slave-owners, said that her family were all embittered against the Negro, and declared that Aggrey had completely changed her sentiments.

In March Aggrey addressed a group of white men at the New York University Y.M.C.A. on "Why I believe that Christianity is the answer to the race problem."

Towards the end of the year Aggrey, accompanied this time by Mrs. Aggrey, visited Canada again. On December 1st he was at the McGill University, Montreal, where he was "luncheoned" in Strathcona Hall, and in the afternoon addressed the West Indian students. On the Sunday afternoon he preached at Macdonald College and in the evening in Delisle Church. Next day he spoke at a large open meeting in Strathcona Hall.

From Montreal he went to Toronto, which became the scene of one of his greatest oratorical triumphs. The occasion was the National Conference of Canadian Students, attended by some thousands of men and women. The snow lay thick upon the ground and for the Aggreys at least, who were accustomed to a southern

climate, the cold was intense. Unfortunately they were at first given a very cold room, and though it was soon changed, Aggrey caught a chill, which was not lessened in intensity by his persisting in standing outside to talk with the students who crowded around him.

On December 4th he addressed the women on " War and how to avoid it." They entertained him to luncheon at the Women's Union next day and he conversed pleasantly about women and the privilege of being university students. He also gave an address in the lecture room at Hart House on " British Rule in Africa."

Up to the hour of leaving New York, Aggrey had been engaged with his examinations at the University and since reaching Toronto had had not a minute to himself. He was quite unprepared for the great meeting in Convocation Hall—half an hour before ascending the platform he confessed to Mrs. Aggrey that he did not know what he was going to say. But his address simply electrified that vast audience of students. Among other things, he told them of the Negroes' part in the Spanish-American War, how at San Juan they sang, as they marched into battle, " There'll be a hot time in the old town to-night." This caught on with the students.

At the closing session a proposal was brought forward by, I think, a Moslem and supported by a Hindu, that the name Christian should be deleted from the title of the Students' Federation. They argued that non-Christian students were as eager as Christians to work for intercollegiate friendship and for other causes for which the Federation stood, but since they were not Christians they could not fight under a Christian banner. The discussion was somewhat warm, but closed without any definite conclusion. At the end the Chairman announced that the conference would sing " God save the King " and then adjourn. The students, however, insisted that Dr. and Mrs. Aggrey should mount the platform and then that Mrs. Aggrey should sing " There'll be a hot time in the old town to-night." Mrs. Aggrey was aware, as others were not aware, of the evil associations of the song. See-

ing her embarrassment, Aggrey stepped forward and asked to be allowed to speak. The permission was enthusiastically given. With consummate artistry, Aggrey introduced the subject that had been discussed. He had no right to interfere, he said, but he would like to tell them what an African thought about it. For Moslems, he declared, he had profound respect, and he told them of an old Moslem on the Gold Coast, a saintly man who was a friend of his father. " But," he continued, " Islam is not good enough for my people—only the best is good enough for Africa. If you can show me a bridge, a hospital, raised by disciples of Muhammad or Confucius in my country ; if you can tell me the name of a missionary from China or Turkey who has died for my people, then I will place my hand over my mouth and accept the deletion of the name Christian from the title of the Federation. I put my hand before my eyes and I see in Africa, from north to south, from east to west, bridges and roads and hospitals and schools, and thousands of men and women living a new life ; and all that comes from Christ. I see Livingstone and Coillard and Mary Slessor, and hundreds more. I see—yes, I actually saw in Africa—a young woman who had lost her husband and children there, and she was returning to work for my people. . . . No, do not let us sing, ' There'll be a hot time.' Africans can sing, as you know, and some day there will be a great assembly of all the nations, Africans will be there as the choir, and they will all sing, 'All hail the power of Jesus' name.' Let us sing it now." And the vast audience leapt to its feet and sang it.

From Toronto Aggrey returned to New York for his oral examinations. The authorities wrote to Dr. Anson Phelps Stokes : " The examining board unanimously agreed that his performance at the examination was a credit to himself and his race." To his Canadian friend,

Mr. H. W. Baker, Aggrey wrote in reference to this: "I feel I have yet very far to go, and I am just getting ready to do some real, sure-enough, honest-to-goodness study."

Having passed this ordeal, Aggrey went home to Salisbury, after six months' absence, to spend six days with his family. Then he went with Mrs. Aggrey to attend the ninth International Convention of the Student Volunteer Movement at Indianapolis. Over six thousand students and visitors, representing 840 institutions, were present. In view of his imminent departure for Africa with the second Commission, his friends endeavoured to persuade the arranging committee to invite one of the other Negro leaders—Dr. Moton, or Dr. Hope of Atlanta—but no, they insisted upon having Aggrey.

The committee which planned this Convention realised that marked changes had taken place in the attitudes of students since the war, and they drew up their programme to demonstrate that Christianity is able to establish a universal brotherhood in spite of a non-Christian social order. They wished to approach Foreign Missions through a presentation of problems of world-wide importance. Students were there from China, Japan, India, the Philippines, Europe, and both Northern and Southern States. They separated into groups for the study of various questions; on the race problem they formulated conclusions which showed in a startling manner the direction which the new generation was taking. The leader of one group, for example—and he was a Southerner—reported as follows:

> The group of which I happen to be a member came to the conclusion that no discrimination ought to be made on the basis of colour necessarily, that each race ought to have a fair and absolutely equal opportunity for its development, that if a race is to give its greatest contribution to the great family of races its own individuality should be preserved. We ask that our fellow students shall go back to their colleges and see that a fair and just attitude is maintained and that each race has every opportunity to make the best

contribution it may have to give to the great family of races and to the Kingdom of God.

Aggrey was, as we might expect, thoroughly in his element among these students. His address happens to be one of the very few of his that were ever reported verbatim. We have already quoted from it. Some other passages may now be introduced :

> A new spirit is coming throughout the South and the North. Let us be patient. I went to Washington and Lee University on one occasion and spoke eight times. Half of the graduating students stood up and gave their lives to Africa. That is a sign. I spoke at Columbus, and when I made the appeal for Africa and my people in this country, one man stood up and said, " I was born in Mobile, and I stand here to say that I am going to go back and spend the rest of my life in seeing that there is more justice between whites and blacks." Another man said, " Son, I was a Confederate officer, but the war is over ; we are going to make this country the best country in the world." You can't tell North from South to-day. Let us be patient. It will take time, and I want to back up you young men of the South. I know what you have to go through, and you, young men and young women of the North, I also know what you are going through. We know our friends from our enemies, and we know that things are going to be better. As we get closer we shall find out that all of us are the sons and daughters of the same Father.

I cannot resist quoting here the beautiful allegory of the Nile with which he closed his fine speech :

> There was a convention of the rivers. The Brahmaputra was there, the Ganges was there, the Thames was there, the Hudson was there, and all the rivers were there. When the convention was over, the chairman asked them where they were going and what they were going to do. The Thames said, " I am going to a place called London, where I will be known as the mistress of all the rivers in the world." The Hudson said, " On my banks are going to be great tall skyscrapers and I will be the wealthiest river in the world." The Ganges said, " Children will be thrown into my bosom and I will be the most sacred river in all the world." The

Mississippi said, " I will be the father of all the waters." But there was another river that did not say a word.

" Who are you ? "

" I am the Nile."

" Where are you going and what are you going to do ? "

The Nile replied : " A long time ago when they were making the world there was one place called Sahara, as big as the United States, where no man could live, and no life grew. Then I said, ' I am going to roll down my waters from the mountains and bring down life from the mountains into the desert, and I am going to flow on into the Mediterranean Sea '."

All the other rivers laughed, " Africa ! Africa ! Why, Nile, why don't you go to some place worth while ; why don't you stay at home, where you belong ? "

But the Nile said, " I will go," and the Nile went.

God Almighty sitting upon His throne saw what the Nile had done and said : " I am going to make the Nile the most beautiful, the most holy river in the world." And so when the old religions were tottering, and the new religion was growing up, He brought it Moses, who was rocked in the cradle of the self-sacrificing Nile, and when Moses was gone and all the prophets, and another higher one was needed to teach us of God, Jesus was born, and even this Jesus Himself might not have done the work He did were it not for one thing : " Go, take the child and His mother to Egypt, by the side of the self-sacrificing Nile, so that it can be said, out of Egypt have I called my son."

Then, you remember, when Jesus was going to be crucified, nobody was able to bear His cross but Simon, who was born by the banks of the self-sacrificing Nile.

So, my friends, don't look down on Africa.

Come to help us. Many are fussing about the blood of Jesus now. I don't fuss about it. It stands for sacrifice. If only the white race could make the supreme sacrifice, not of blood, but of what we generally call race-superiority, if you could give that up and become brothers with us !

" No one of the speakers on the programme received the ovation which Mr. Aggrey met," says a distinguished lady who was present. " He held that vast audience spellbound, and after the meeting he was so surrounded by young people of different nationalities that I found it

impossible to get to him as I desired. He himself constitutes one of the greatest arguments for missionary effort."

It was on December 31st that Aggrey spoke at Indianapolis. Mrs. Aggrey and he left there on New Year's day, and arrived home the following evening. On the third he departed for New York and on the 5th sailed for England to join the Education Commission.

Since the first Commission he had, he tells us, made 500 public speeches, in addition to his work at Columbia University.

CHAPTER XIII

THE SECOND COMMISSION

IN June, 1922, Aggrey wrote to Dr. Anson Phelps Stokes: "It seems that my hopes concerning my native country are going to be realised, at least to some extent, and the Phelps-Stokes Commission has been the key. Everywhere I have been, interest in Africa is getting greater and greater."

While Aggrey was completing his studies at Columbia University and interpreting Africa to great numbers of influential people, very important events were taking place. The Report of the first Education Commission, prepared by Dr. Jesse Jones, had aroused tremendous interest in Government and missionary circles. It heralded the dawn of a new day for Africa. The British Government, in particular, was stirred to fresh activity in regard to education. Missionary societies, which had borne the heat and burden of the day, began to see their educational work in its true perspective and to realise the necessity of adapting their efforts more to the actual needs of the Africans in their rapidly changing environment. Both Governments and Missions awoke to the magnitude of the task confronting them when they considered it as a whole, and the question of more effective co-operation between them, ardently advocated by Dr. Jones, was entered upon, with some trepidation in certain quarters, but with earnest desire to find a basis for collaboration.

In the spring and summer of 1923, Dr. Jones took part in conversations with prominent public men in England, which led up to the formation of a Central Advisory Committee on Education in Tropical Africa. On July 25th, Mr. Ormsby Gore announced in Parliament the names of

the members. These were: Sir Frederick (now Lord) Lugard, Mr. J. H. Oldham, Sir Michael Sadler, the Bishop of Edmundsbury (formerly Headmaster of Rugby, now Bishop of Liverpool), and Sir James Currie, Director of the Gordon College in Khartum. "We were led largely to this as the result of a most extraordinarily interesting report issued by Dr. Jesse Jones," said Mr. Ormsby Gore. Aggrey hailed this event with delight, qualified in one particular: "I wish there were a native African on the committee," said he.

The first Commission had visited only West and South Africa; it was felt imperative that Dr. Jesse Jones should now complete the survey by leading a second Commission to East Africa. The Phelps-Stokes Trustees agreed and on September 20th, 1923, voted 6,500 dollars towards the expenses. The missionary societies and the British Government co-operated. Dr. Jones and Aggrey were the only members of the first Commission to be appointed on the second, the other members being: Dr. J. H. Dillard, Dr. H. L. Shantz, of the United States Department of Agriculture, and Dr. Garfield Williams, of the Church Missionary Society. Mr. Hanns Vischer, secretary of the Advisory Committee, worked with the Commission throughout; Dr. C. T. Loram joined it in South Africa; and Mr. J. W. C. Dougall acted as secretary. The Commission was therefore "international, interdenominational and interracial."

We are not called upon to describe in detail the work of the Commission, a full account of which is contained in Dr. Jesse Jones's report entitled *Education in East Africa*. We are concerned with Aggrey only. Unfortunately very few of his letters written during the tour have come into my hands, and we have to rely chiefly upon information supplied by others.

Aggrey spent a week in England. The night before he left London some West African students called on him at the Hotel Victoria, and he took them out to "a midnight dinner." Other students gathered around him afterwards. Some of them showed strong leanings

toward Garveyism, others were followers of Dr. Dubois. Aggrey had a frank talk with them and gained their confidence. "I won them for co-operation," he said. They separated at four o'clock in the morning.

The Commission left London on January 15th, 1924, and sailed from Marseilles on the 17th. They landed at Djibuti, the port of French Somaliland, on the 29th and travelled by rail to Abyssinia, where they stayed, in and around the capital, Addis Abbaba, from February 1st to 6th, paying visits to the Government and mission schools and conferring with the authorities. "The Abyssinians took me into their confidence," Aggrey wrote. "They claimed me as their own and spoke to me behind closed doors [on] things no white man has found out." Some of them wanted him to return to Abyssinia for some years to assume the direction of the educational system.

Then, by way of Djibuti and Mombasa, the Commission went to Kenya, where they remained from February 18th to March 9th. They were faced by a difficult situation involving the relations between three groups: the European settlers, the Indians, and the overwhelming mass of native Africans. "We are not interested in quarrels," Dr. Jones announced, "but in encouraging a type of education that in the long run makes for sound relationships."

To a few of the settlers the presence of a black man on the Commission was a stumbling-block—they did not make it easy for Aggrey. But for the most part the Europeans welcomed him and treated him with every consideration. "I think the settlers, the Missions and the Natives saw things in a better light," said Aggrey, summing up the Commission's work. "The Governor, the Chief Secretary, Mr. Denham,* Lord Delamere, Mr. Archer, the leader of the settlers, and the Native leaders, seem to have liked me." He spoke on thirty-three occasions in Kenya. In Nairobi he preached in the Anglican Mission church, and with other members of the Commission addressed a gathering at the European school, where

* Now (1929) Sir Edward Denham, Governor of the Gambia.

once again he proved his power to touch the imagination and heart of a European audience.

Such men as Archdeacon Owen testify that the visit of the Commission was " a perfect godsend " to the country ; that the reception accorded to them was " simply fine " and that they won their way everywhere. Aggrey's presence made all the difference where the Africans were concerned ; it gave them confidence ; and they rallied around him in a remarkable manner. At Maseno, for example, he made contact with the Kavirondo people as no white man could have done. He won their hearts and they dogged his footsteps with a touching, almost pathetic, devotion. Archdeacon Owen arranged a gathering of the Taxpayers' Welfare Association —the biggest meeting that had ever been held in the district—and Aggrey gave an address that will be long remembered.

Aggrey also met, at their own request, groups of Indians at Nairobi and Kisumu and discussed the situation with them.

Aggrey spent a week-end at Kahuhia, the Church Missionary Society's station in the heart of the Kikuyu country. The Rev. H. D. Hooper has written as follows about this visit :

> On the Saturday evening we strolled around the station. It was supper time when we reached the girls' boarding school, and there was much laughter and excitement when we accepted the eager invitation to join them at their meal. Aggrey had to pass his opinion on the food, and to tell them what food people were accustomed to eat in his home in West Africa. The girls were all agog to hear what he said, and their quick exclamations and sudden chatter awoke the exhilarating smile which was generally gleaming on his own face.
>
> *Bwana witu* (" our Mister ") was what they called him, *Bwana* being a title of respect given to most Europeans, and only latterly to a few of the more advanced Africans of character and position. I think they thought of him (through his use of English, his ignorance of their tongue, and his reception in our spare room) as a black European who was

essentially theirs, but our equal in all the strange advantages which we enjoyed. They have a great capacity for hero worship, but I have never seen anyone who made so instantaneous or lasting an impression on them. He literally thrilled them ; and I can only find an adequate explanation in the fact that our people always reminded me of the Jews before the coming of the Lord, in their expectation of a Messiah. It was not so explicit, but there was the same sort of eye lifted to the threshold to see the arrival of the Leader.

We went back from their common room to my house, and the wife and I chewed the rag with him far into the night ; chiefly on women's education. At that time Kenya was not very enlightened and we were regarded in our own circle as rather risky radicals. It was delightful, therefore, to find someone—and an African—who shared our views of the extreme importance of greater emphasis on the training of women.

He also said how often European missionaries were led astray by thinking they understood when they did not. And he cited, as an example of what he meant, the instance of one missionary who told him that the people of the district did not understand gratitude—they had no word for " thank you " ! Aggrey replied, " Oh, excuse me, but they have ! " " I've been here twenty years," retorted the missionary, " so I ought to know." " I've been here twenty hours," said Aggrey, " but I know they have a word for thanks." He had discovered that their way of thanks was to say, " I lie down to you : I am at your feet." The same expression occurred in connection with their words for " lord " and " master," and implied " Until I can repay you I lie at your feet and you are my lord and master."

Another interesting point we discussed was the discontent which was so difficult to avoid when trying to improve conditions of life.

For answer, as so many Africans do, he held himself up : " Look at me," he said, " I have been through every phase and know I could never have been so happy as I am now. Never believe that these people can be *really* happy remaining as they are. The changes have to be gone through, but the results justify them."

Next morning he spoke by interpretation to a packed congregation, and with his illuminating parables preached the

gospel of strenuous striving upwards to the best, with its reward in the consummation which Christ effects.

We had to let him go on to another station that evening, for other folk were clamouring to see him ; but everywhere, I think, he met with the same instant acceptance and almost pathetic readiness to receive him as a prophet.

One other incident struck me. He only spent about ten minutes in my study in Kenya, but he was there long enough for his eye to be caught by a small card hanging over my desk.

What was my surprise four years later, when he was lunching with me in Salisbury Square, to hear him suddenly quote the words he had seen on that card, and could not have come across elsewhere ; indeed, he mentioned where he had seen them, on his visit to us in Kenya.

From Kenya the Commission proceeded by rail and steamer to Uganda.

In Kampala, the capital, he was the guest of the Rev. H. M. Grace, the principal of Mengo High School. On the Saturday after his arrival he went out to Mukono to spend the week-end at the Bishop Tucker Memorial College. He was the guest of the Principal, Canon E. S. Daniell, and Mrs. Daniell, but all his spare time was spent in the college with the fifty students, who plied him with questions. Canon Daniell had expected to find in him a spoilt African but quickly discovered him to be humble-minded, a man whom adulation had not robbed of his simplicity. On the Sunday morning he preached in the college chapel. His interpreter, a very phlegmatic person, woke up surprisingly that morning ; it was interesting to see him carried away by the sermon ; he was soon putting as much life and emphasis into it as Aggrey himself. " I will go in the strength of the Lord God " was the burthen of the message. In the afternoon Aggrey preached in the village church. It was packed, for the students had spread abroad the tidings of Aggrey's wonderful preaching. The students were gathered round the base of the pulpit and on the chancel steps ; in a corner sat Ham Mukasa, the famous county chief, smiling with appreciation as Aggrey drove his points home ; near him were

grouped 150 schoolboys ; men and women of the village were there too. It was the kind of congregation that Aggrey loved. His subject was a favourite one : Moses' rod. He closed with his famous story of the Eagle, which we have transcribed elsewhere as Canon Daniell wrote it down that evening.

Returning to Kampala, Aggrey spent a week in inspecting schools. Canon Daniell accompanied him to a private kindergarten kept by an English lady for the children of chiefs and was struck by his delightful courtesy to her. In the afternoons, when he was free from official engagements, young men flocked to talk with him. There he sat on the open verandah of Mr. Grace's house, looking out over the town, advising the lads to seize the opportunities of learning, to apply in daily life what they acquired in school, and above all, to have Christ as the central figure in all social, political and commercial activities. " Do not tire of learning," he said, " no one is too old to learn." " Sometimes," he remarked one day, " certain Europeans will tell you that you do not need God ; but it is not so ; Africans cannot live without Him." One evening he addressed a meeting of mixed societies held in a large school-room. He appeared in evening clothes and used them adroitly as an alternative illustration of his favourite topic of co-operation. Said he : " When I am fully dressed as I am now, my black suit would not be complete without a white collar and a white shirt." So Black and White must go together. In a fascinating and sympathetic way he showed how the people of Uganda needed five G's : grit, glow, glue, gold and God. " We need one another," he said. " If the Europeans were to leave Uganda altogether tomorrow, Africans would run, swim or fly to ask them to come back. If the Africans were to leave, the Europeans would do the same thing. So, brothers, we need glue."

A young Muganda, Mr. M. K. Parma, invited Aggrey to his home. That evening, when darkness enveloped the roads and lanes of the unlighted town, and all around was hushed in silence, Aggrey sat with his host and

hostess and a few youthful guests. Refreshments were served and he gave them a short and what one would call a heart-felt talk, telling the story of Elisha and the Shunamite woman. " Gehazi thought more about his honour than about his duty," he said. " God will not work through us to bring His people to life again, until we do as Elisha did : lay ourselves upon them, mouth to their mouth, our eyes to their eyes, our hands to their hands." "When one knows the life of Dr. Aggrey," comments a Muganda, Mr. K. L. B. Kisosankole, " his open-heartedness to every man, and his capacity for finding humour and jokes in bullyings and abuses, one can understand that this idea of closest contact penetrated and influenced his whole life. Dr. Aggrey did not love Africa, his Africa, with prejudice. To his mind brotherhood of man was the climax. He realised, as few men who have suffered from racial discrimination do realise, that racial differences are not accidental, but have a purpose, and that the world is wide enough for *all* living."

It is interesting to have this educated African's impressions of Aggrey. He continues : " The people of Uganda looked upon him as an elder and learned brother, one who had had great experience and was able to lead. They trusted him and believed what he said with simple implicitness. His personality attracted people of different creeds and outlook. His piercing eyes, beaming with love and joy, and his typical African smile, made him lovable ; he was so simple that even children of school age dared to go and speak to him, however limited and inaccurate their knowledge of English. In his bedroom some sat on his bed, others on the floor, one or two on chairs, and in the midst of them he sat and talked to them in such simple and easy language that all could understand what he was telling them." That is a charming picture.

And Mr. Kisosankole sums up as follows some of the effects of Aggrey's visit. " Firstly, young people were convinced that leaving school need not mean cessation of learning. Secondly, by saying frankly about at least two Englishmen that though they happened to be white their

hearts were 'black,' because of their splendid work, he induced both Whites and Blacks to see that colour did not matter: there was not a single time in his speeches or his conversations when he did not bring out this point directly or indirectly. Thirdly, he succeeded in persuading young people not to despise manual labour: 'God gave you land; develop it.' Many people, after he had left Uganda, abandoned office work and went to cultivate their land. Fourthly, he stimulated the desire for learning in women, or rather in young girls, by holding up his wife as an example. Fifthly, he showed that progress never excludes religion. And, sixthly, he proved that co-operation is essential to progress, whatever the differences in creed, society or colour."

On the second Sunday it was noised abroad that Aggrey was to preach in the great Namirembe cathedral. About three thousand people filled the building and a great crowd stood outside: Protestants, Roman Catholics, Moslems, Pagans, all were there. He took his favourite subject again: the rod in Moses' hand. "One can hardly forget what Aggrey said," writes Mr. Kisosankole, "as he stood there, speaking almost at the top of his voice, swinging and spreading his arms, now this way and now that way. 'What is that in thine hand? A kingdom? Cast it down. A school? Commerce? Domestic service? Cast it down; and you will be amazed at the wonders that God can do with it.'"

Later in the day Aggrey preached in the European Church—it was the first time an African had been invited to do so. Africans stood without and crowded in—and nobody minded.

The Provincial Commissioner invited a select number of influential men to meet at his house after the service. Aggrey talked to them. A Jew was there who habitually cursed Missions and everything connected with them, and he stood listening with amazement to this Christian African as he asked for a wide sympathy and a wise discipline for his people. Aggrey's tact and wisdom, says one who was present, were almost supernatural.

A great crowd gathered on the shore of Victoria Nyanza to say good-bye to Aggrey. Some of the people sobbed. As the steamer thrust out, Aggrey waved his hat and gave them a last word. " Remember, my brothers, to love and to work. If anyone tells you that Africans cannot learn, do not believe him. Tell him that your brother Aggrey learnt something. Look at my hair and prove that I am one of you ! Again, I say, love and work. Good-bye ! "

Aggrey's visit and personality stirred the Baganda to the depths. They knew nothing of him before he arrived. At the end of a fortnight, it is no exaggeration to say, he could have led them anywhere.

The Commissioners returned to the coast by train, and proceeded from Mombasa to Dar-es-Salaam in Tanganyika Territory. They spent the period from March 30th to April 12th in that country.

When they arrived at Dar-es-Salaam they put up at an hotel kept by a Greek. That evening they were invited to dinner at Government House. On returning to the hotel between eleven o'clock and midnight Aggrey found that all his baggage had been moved out of his room because some white men had threatened to break up the hotel if they were required to sleep under the same roof as a nigger. The joke tickled Aggrey immensely. Entertained by the King's representative in the Governor's Palace, and not thought fit to sleep under the same roof with half-educated Whites ! He found a resting place in the proprietor's private apartments.

Some of the Europeans were frankly hostile to the Commission, and particularly to Aggrey's presence. Dr. Jesse Jones had a conversation with their leader, an ex-naval officer, explained the kind of education that the Commission advocated and told him what one Governor had said—that he would rather have Aggrey in the

country than a regiment of soldiers ; and the man had the grace to apologise.

From Dar-es-Salaam the Commission travelled inland by rail as far as Tabora, visiting various mission stations and schools on, or away from, the line. We catch one glimpse of Aggrey on *safari*, as they say in East Africa.

To Mrs. Aggrey. Buigiri, Tanganyika,
April 1st, 1924.

I am writing this in my tent pitched under the beautiful starlit night in Buigiri, some four hundred twenty-five miles inland from Dar-es-Salaam and from the 425-mile post at the railroad, still two hours and a quarter's walk from the station into the woods. Some would call it " the wilds," but I call it a privileged station where devoted missions are doing yeoman work for my people. Some come from England, some from Australia, not disobedient to the holy vision. They have come to make their lives count for the Master. They are having some sort of a conference here, and there are white women here who have *walked* four days to get here to discuss what best to do for the betterment of my people. There is a tent each for Dr. Jones, Dr. Garfield Williams, Mr. Dougal and myself. Dr. Jones rode a mule from the station here ; I started in a chair, but gave it up soon and walked. Bishop Heywood, Dr. Williams, Dougal and myself walked. The walk did us good. . . . 'Tis now near midnight, I have a hurricane lamp, a table, chair, large bucket of water for my bath in the morning, a washstand and my own camp outfit in my tent. . . . We have been admiring the Milky Way, the Great Dipper and the Southern Cross among the " heavenly constellations." On such a night methinks Moses or the prophet sang, " The heavens declare the glory of God and the earth sheweth forth His handiwork "—and thus gave expression to one of the most beautiful psalms. The singer of the 8th psalm must have been inspired likewise. I am inspired to write you. Yes, Bishop Heywood, an Englishman, walked two hours and a half, or quarter, to-day. To-morrow he walks four hours—he and Dr. Williams—and will keep on walking his rounds in interior Tanganyika. Imagine any of our bishops walking two and a half hours, and then four hours next day, and so on, in the interest of foreigners, or people not belonging to

their own race! . . . Dr. Jones and I stay here to-morrow. I am to speak to the students; next morning, Thursday, I leave for a point, three hours' walk, to investigate a school or schools, then walk an additional half an hour and go to a station where I am to join the four or five [other commissioners] again for further [travel] inland—maybe more trekking or travelling on the railroad. The Government has given us a special car of six beds and a shower [bath] to travel in. But when we leave the train we walk.

April 12th saw Aggrey on the island of Zanzibar. The proprietor of the Africa Hotel had expressed his unwillingness to reserve rooms for an African, so the British Resident asked Canon Spanton of the Universities' Mission to Central Africa to extend hospitality to Aggrey. Canon Spanton was only too glad to have him. It struck Aggrey as amusing that an hotel bearing the name of his native land should not open its doors to him. "He was a charming guest in the house," says the Canon, "and was, as those who knew him might have expected that he would be, equally at home with us, with our students, and with those whom he met at the Resident's table. On the Sunday evening of his stay he addressed the students and staff in our big hall and produced a very considerable effect on all who heard him. Long afterwards the boys talked about him and what he had said. He spoke in English, as he was not familiar with Swahili and had to be interpreted, but his manner and whole bearing were more eloquent than his words."

From Zanzibar the Commission travelled by steamer south to Beira, arriving there on April 21st. Thence they went by rail to Nyasaland, where they journeyed 550 miles by lake steamer and 400 miles by car, visiting schools established by various Missions.

Several missionaries, Scottish, Dutch and English, testify that Aggrey made a profound impression on the Natives of Nyasaland. To these he was at first a curiosity: a black man travelling on equal terms with white men; they thought he must be a white man painted black! On one of the mission stations, it was observed that the

servant lad detached to look after Aggrey would not enter his bedroom alone, but always called a companion to go with him. In school the lad's teacher had (erroneously) told the class that Aggrey's people had at one time been cannibals ; the lad therefore thought it best to have a witness who might survive to account for his mysterious disappearance ! No one laughed more heartily at this incident than Aggrey himself. But all such misconceptions speedily vanished. Thousands of Africans flocked to see and hear him—chiefs and headmen walked many miles to where he was. So overpowering was his eloquence that the missionaries found it difficult to close the meetings ; these lasted sometimes for four hours and more. Here, as elsewhere, he loved to dwell upon what the missionaries had done for " my people." In Nyasaland the story of the eagle and the sermon about the rod in Moses's hand, became as familiar as in Uganda.

To the people of Nyasaland, writes Dr. Hetherwick of Blantyre, " he was a new revelation. In him they saw a future possibility for themselves. . . . He became to the Native at once a hero. They flocked round him whenever he was free and his sayings and doings were quoted long after he left. They recognised in him a future for the African not in antagonism to the European. Unfortunately the time at the disposal of the Commission was very brief and much more might have been accomplished had Dr. Aggrey had longer time at his disposal. Brief as it was his visit to Nyasaland made an impression that will not be effaced in the present generation of young Africa." A Dutch missionary wrote to Aggrey : " Thank you again ever so much for what you said and did in and for our mission. Do you think there is any possibility of your visiting Nyasaland again ? We would do much to get you back again for a few months. You will do more good for the Cause during one month in the mission field than in a whole year as professor at a college or university. You seem to have squashed the sects badly ; they are beginning to come back in driblets."

Aggrey received the warmest of welcomes at the

Livingstonia Mission, where he was the guest of the Rev. A. MacAlpine. The time he spent there was a time of incessant activity; nobody spared him, nor did he grudge his energy. He preached on Sunday, April 27th, and spent the other days in examining schools and in talking with the people. The Scottish missionaries, like the Dutch further south, were troubled at this time by subversive agitation. Here it was the Watch Tower Movement, which was more political than religious. Not the least important of Aggrey's services was to enlighten the Natives' minds in regard to this crazy business.

Educated Africans in Nyasaland have compared Aggrey with Dr. Livingstone. The great explorer opened the land to the influence of western civilisation; Aggrey opened the Natives' eyes to the value of their land. His advice to work hard in tilling the soil led many to begin growing cotton and tobacco, in addition to food-stuffs.

Turning on their tracks the Commission travelled by train again to Beira and thence to Southern Rhodesia.

In Salisbury, Aggrey was the guest of the Wesleyan missionaries, the Rev. and Mrs. L. P. Hardaker, who look back to his sojourn as a never-to-be-forgotten incident. Never before had they entertained an African. They invited Aggrey with some trepidation, but a few hours of his company made them ashamed that they had ever doubted. They found him "a perfect gentleman." "One evening," says Mr. Hardaker, "we sat round the fire and he bared his soul to us. I dare only say that to my wife and to myself those hours are marked as an occasion when we were lifted into the heavenly places with Christ Jesus. We sat at his feet and we were led into the deep things of God. I suppose every student remembers occasions during his college days when conversation lasted far into the night and ineffaceable memories remained. I remember several; but the experience with Dr. Aggrey was the greatest of all."

Aggrey's fellow-commissioners noticed that when they

were approaching South Africa he was apprehensive of what he might have to face on account of his colour. No doubt his past experiences warned him what to expect. On the train from Beira to Salisbury he was badly treated—could not obtain proper food. On his arrival he was suffering with dysentery and the physician ordered him to bed. When Mrs. Hardaker prepared invalid food for him and the physician refused to take a fee, Aggrey appreciated it all the more because of his apprehensions. On the Sunday evening Mr. Hardaker had been invited to take a meal with some European friends; he called to excuse himself on account of Aggrey, but they insisted that Aggrey should accompany him. It was a happy household full of young people. In half an hour Aggrey was at home, with the children on his knees, entertaining them in a way they are not likely to forget. Aggrey felt these kindnesses deeply, glowed under them.

The Commission attended the Southern Rhodesia Missionary Conference. One morning, the Rev. A. A. Louw, of the Dutch Reformed Church, who was planned to conduct the devotional service, suggested to the President that Aggrey should take his place. The wisdom of this was questioned, and when Mr. Louw suggested that Aggrey should at least offer the prayer, he was asked, "We have only a quarter of an hour for devotions, will he be able to pray five minutes?" Mr. Louw passed the question on to Aggrey, who, with a smile, replied. "I can manage to pray two minutes, if necessary." He did not exceed that time, and his prayer seemed to open hearts to him. He was invited to address the Conference, and he also took part in one or two debates.

His Excellency the Governor invited the Conference to a Garden Party and extended his gracious hospitality to the European members of the Commission. By inadvertence, it may be, Aggrey was not included. He was cut to the quick; this was the first slight he had received from the King's representatives in Africa. He asked Mr. Hardaker to take him to the location, and spent the afternoon talking to the Africans.

On the Sunday morning Aggrey preached to a crowded congregation in the Epworth Wesleyan Church, his theme being faith in God even when His ways are not understood. He also addressed a women's meeting, talking quite simply about things African women understand. He told them how, in his younger days when he washed his own clothes and could not afford to buy an iron, he used a bottle filled with hot water to press his shirts.

That afternoon a memorable open air gathering, arranged by Mr. Hardaker, took place in the Location. Three thousand Africans assembled and a certain number of Europeans. Sir Herbert Taylor, then Chief Native Commissioner, presided. Aggrey speaking through two interpreters, gave a message to the Africans by means of his story of the eagle, and to the Europeans by means of his parable of the piano. Mr. H. M. Jackson, the present Chief Native Commissioner, has kindly given me his impressions. He writes :

> Dr. Aggrey passed through Southern Rhodesia with the Phelps-Stokes Commission. A fleeting sojourn of a few days ! A globe-trotting ! Unlike most globe-trotters he left an indelible impression of a sort which I for one cannot attempt to analyse. It was certainly not his appearance. Somewhat undersized, typically West African, with no outward index of his great heart and soul. I saw a huge concourse of his ethnical superiors hang on his every word, delivered in English and interpreted into our two best-known Native dialects. His allegory of an eagle vainly transformed for the nonce into a domestic fowl persists in the memory of every auditor. Why ? I can only conclude that complete selflessness arising from the habit of service for others had engendered a rare magnetic power, a rare sincerity, and that therein lay the secret of his appeal to all of us—white and black—who were privileged to listen to him on that day in the Native Location of Salisbury in Southern Rhodesia.

The Rhodesia Herald reporter made this comment : " After listening to Dr. Aggrey one came away with the feeling that every word he spoke had effect, and that a

missionary of his description, knowing his own people as he appeared to do, would, under Government supervision, probably do more for the natives in a few years than all our well-meaning European ones would in a lifetime."

Aggrey visited the Mission of the Dutch Reformed Church at Morgenster, in the neighbourhood of the famous Zimbabwe ruins, to attend the annual session of the mission Council. There too he made a great and lasting impression upon the Africans. They had never before seen an educated black man of his type, and it was wonderful for them to realise that an African could reach such a stage of civilisation and learning. I quote these words from one of the missionaries, who continues: "Their eyes followed him wherever he went, and spellbound they hung upon his lips when he spoke."

The Commissioners next travelled to Northern Rhodesia. At Livingstone, the capital, Aggrey was invited to dine with Mr. Justice (now Sir) P. J. Macdonell, Mr. Mackenzie Kennedy and Mr. G. L. Latham, the Director of Education. They were struck by his quiet good manners, and by his evident appreciation of what he considered their courtesy in inviting him. "He was extraordinarily unassuming," says Mr. Latham.

Aggrey and his colleagues (Messrs. Jones, Vischer and Dougal) proceeded up the line to Kafue to attend the General Missionary Conference of Northern Rhodesia, which was held at the Primitive Methodist Institution four miles from the township. The Rev. J. R. Fell, the Principal, had arranged that the Commissioners and delegates arriving by train should breakfast first at the hotel. He had not thought of mentioning that one of the visitors was a black man, so almost at the last moment he called again on Mr. Shapcott, the proprietor, and this conversation took place.

"This Commission, Mr. Shapcott."

"Yes, what about it?"

"Do you know that one of them is an African?"

"Yes, I do; what about it?"

"What will your regular boarders say? They may not like a black man sitting in the room with them."

"Well, if they don't like it they can damn well lump it."

To the credit of Northern Rhodesia, be it said, no objection was raised against Aggrey's presence.

"The members of the Commission stayed in our house and were our guests whilst at the Conference," writes Mr. Fell, "we had a constant stream of delegates at our table to meet them. Dr. Aggrey was the centre of attraction. He was a perfect gentleman. His kindly manner impressed all who came near him. Though so much was made of him he always identified himself with the Bantu—always spoke of them as 'my people.'"

Dr. Jesse Jones and Aggrey addressed the Conference on Education and advantage was taken of the Commission's assistance to draw up an educational scheme for presentation to Government. A resolution was passed requesting the Governor to arrange, if possible, for Aggrey to pay an extended visit to the Territory, but this, unfortunately, was not feasible. A discussion took place on the Watch Tower Movement that was causing serious perturbation both to missionaries and officials. Aggrey showed that there was no need for panic; "not until he stood up and pleaded for his people," says Mr. Fell, "did we really feel that there was still a possibility of great good arising from the movement."

During the Conference Aggrey spent some time closeted with the students of the Institution and other Natives. His exposition of the Watch Tower affair and the rumoured coming of Americans to drive out the whites, and his insistence upon education and co-operation, were carried far and wide through the country, "so that it may never be known how important a rôle he filled in stilling the storm that raged in the hearts of some of our black folk," says Mr. Fell.

Leaving Northern Rhodesia, Aggrey travelled south again to Bulawayo. He arrived at 10 a.m. and was to leave again at 5 p.m. At 2 p.m. he addressed a meeting in

the Wesleyan Church and at 3 a great open-air gathering of about four thousand Natives in the Location. Judge A. F. Russell, of the High Court of Rhodesia, who presided, says, "Dr. Aggrey conveyed an impression of ability with modesty. His humour was most attractive; an eloquent and attractive speaker, in private his interest in the classics was a most interesting trait in a fine character." Mrs. Hepburn (a name famous in missionary annals) sat beside Aggrey on the platform that afternoon. "You remind me of my friend Khama," she said to him. "I wish you two could meet." Aggrey's face lighted up as he exclaimed with enthusiasm, "Madam, I am going to his town to see him." Unfortunately, I have no record of any meeting between these two eminent Africans.

Aggrey proceeded through South Africa to Johannesburg, where he spoke three times in one day, and then to Durban, where he attended another missionary conference. On June 20th he and Mr. Dougal sailed for England. The steamer stayed at Cape Town for three days and Aggrey went to Stellenbosch to address the Dutch students. "At first," he wrote, "the air was 'icy,' but soon it all thawed." It was perhaps the first time that an African had spoken there. In Cape Town he addressed the white Teachers' Association of the Cape Province—"had a great time." And so to England and then to his home in the United States.

What Dr. Anson Phelps Stokes wrote in the Report of the First Commission may with equal truth be said of the second: "Each officer and member of the Commission made his important contribution to its conclusions—and none more so than Mr. Aggrey . . . whose humour, sanity, eloquence, knowledge of Native psychology, thorough training in education and sociology, and high Christian purpose, all proved assets of great importance, especially in dealing wisely and constructively with the complicated problems due to racial differences."

The great adventure was now ended. Another chapter of Aggrey's life was closed; the last was about to open.

Part IV

AT ACHIMOTA—AND AFTER

" Only the best is good enough for Africa."

" I want all my people, my countrymen, women and men, to be educated in the larger sense, in heart, hand and head, and thus render Africa indispensable in spiritual, intellectual and commercial products to the world."

" I pray that God may continue to make me humble, meek and mild in my own interest, but bold as a lion, impregnable as adamant and as determined as Fate when it comes to working for Christian co-operation, for the elevation of my race, and for the protection of childhood and womanhood."

" Africa needs the choicest missionaries, even stronger men than are sent to China. The load there or in India or in Japan is not so heavy ; the heavier the load, the stronger must be the horse. The load of Africa is so heavy that the very best, the strongest, the most broadly educated missionaries must get under it."

" I wish all missionaries had learnt Algebra, for then they would have known how to eliminate by substitution."

" If you go to Africa expecting something from us, and give us a chance to do something for you, we will give you a surprise."

" At this time of my country's life I am anxious that Africa should be ' civilised ' not westernised, and that the civilisation should be Christian. We want a Christian civilisation—and thus together with the best in our own culture we may make a definite contribution to twentieth century civilisation."

J. E. K. Aggrey.

CHAPTER XIV

THE GENESIS OF ACHIMOTA

"NEVER the time and the place and the loved one all together!"—so lamented Robert Browning. The romantic story of Achimota proves that on occasion the time and the place and the persons do arrive simultaneously.

When the world war closed, Brigadier-General (now Sir) F. G. Guggisberg solemnly vowed to devote the rest of his life to the service of his fellow-men. At first no opening presented itself. Then, to his amazement, Lord Milner offered him the governorship of the Gold Coast, a country with which he was already familiar since he had been in charge of the Survey. He leapt at the opportunity.

Of all African territories the Gold Coast was ripest for a new and progressive educational policy. Its trade had made astounding advances through the development of the cocoa industry. Year by year the accounts showed a surplus of revenue over expenditure. The material wealth of the people exceeded that of any other West African community. The Government had, therefore, money to spend on schools. The people were eager for education. The situation was not complicated, as in other African territories, by the presence of a large and dominant European population. There was no question of preparing Africans to be more proficient servants of the Whites—servants, not equals and competitors in the economic sphere. The Africans were at home, and free, in their own land. Not repression, but encouragement and guidance in fulfilling laudable ambition, was the expressed policy of the British Government.

Education had been carried on for a long time chiefly by the missionary societies, supported in some measure by the Government. In 1919 approximately 463 schools were open and the Government expenditure amounted to £54,000. But these schools provided for only about 10 per cent. of the children. Some excellent work was done, but, generally speaking, the education was too largely literary, too little adapted to actual needs. Grammar and English were regarded as the most important subjects. The schools had sprung up faster than trained teachers could be provided. The girls were neglected, the proportion of girls to boys attending school being only one to five. There was too great a gulf between the few highly educated men, who had taken degrees in England, and the ordinary products of the primary schools. English was made the medium of instruction so early that pupils consumed their energy in learning the foreign words and had little left for the subjects. It usually took ten or twelve years for them to pass seven standards. It was not their intelligence that was at fault, but the want of training on the part of the teachers and the incubus of a foreign language. Boys were crammed for the College of Preceptors and other English examinations—there were actually coaches and professional crammers for these examinations.

Many of the Chiefs and the so-called Intelligentsia were aware of the faulty nature of the education that was offered—were desirous that their ancient culture should not be obliterated by the influx of western civilisation.

The new educational policy aimed at achieving a synthesis of African and European culture. Of that policy, Achimota was to be the chief instrument.

The new Governor was an enthusiast for education. In his first address to the Legislative Council he announced that this would be the main plank in his policy. He was soon convinced of the need for radical reform. Soon after his arrival in September, 1919, he received the report of a Committee appointed by his predecessor to examine the subject, but it seemed to him that their

Photo by J. A. C. Holm

SIR GORDON GUGGISBERG AND THE STAFF OF PRINCE OF WALES COLLEGE, ACHIMOTA, JANUARY, 1927

recommendations did not go far enough. A new Committee was set up and presented its report before the arrival of the Phelps-Stokes Commission in October, 1920. That visit did not create but it greatly stimulated Government's interest in education, and emphasised the need for adapting it to the actual needs of the people.

The chief proposal of the new Committee was the erection of a secondary school and a new college for training teachers. For this they chose a magnificent site on a waterless, uncultivated hill covered with long grass eight miles from Accra, the capital. Its name was Achimota, meaning "Do not mention the name." It was a place of ill-omen.* Later, when the school was built, the word acquired a new significance.

The estimates for 1923-4, submitted to the Legislative Council, included the sum of £210,000 for the new school. In March, 1924, the foundation stone was laid by Sir Gordon Guggisberg. The plans, not of the original buildings, but of the education to be given, were revised when the Principal arrived later in the year. Achimota, it was then decided, should include a School and a College; the former to consist of a kindergarten and a lower primary school for boys and girls, as well as an upper primary school for girls, and the College to consist of a boys' upper primary school, a secondary school and a University College for advanced education. The total accommodation was eventually to be for 770 boarders, 230 in the School, and 540 in the College. The cost of the buildings was ultimately reckoned at over £600,000.

It was a magnificent scheme, but Sir Gordon Guggisberg saw clearly that its success depended upon the men who would carry it out. He looked for a Principal and a

*The name is said to have arisen from the fact that escaped slaves hid in this waste place, and passers-by who saw them were considered ill-conditioned if they gave them away.

staff who would make Achimota, not merely a seat of learning, but a great character-forming institution. However fine the buildings might be, under the wrong men it might easily degenerate into a school of the old type. Sir Gordon was in constant consultation with the Advisory Committee at the Colonial Office on this as on other subjects. Mr. J. H. Oldham suggested several names in succession. Among others he named the Rev. A. G. Fraser, who was then Principal of Trinity College in Ceylon. When they met in London Sir Gordon was immediately convinced that Mr. Fraser was the man to carry out into action the rather unformed conceptions in his own mind. Mr. Fraser was not at that time, however, prepared to leave Ceylon.

In January, 1924, when Aggrey was in England prior to sailing for Africa on the second Commission, he was the guest of Mr. J. H. Oldham at his home in Surrey. On the morning after his arrival—it was a Saturday—they had a talk about Aggrey's future. Sir Gordon Guggisberg had offered him a high position in the new school; the professorship at Fort Hare was still open for him; the Nigerian Government was also desirous of securing his services. Mr. Oldham had no difficulty in observing that Aggrey's heart was in the Gold Coast. "The call of my Africa stirs a depth no other plummet has fathomed," said he. They discussed Achimota. Who was to be the Principal? "What about A. G. Fraser?" said Mr. Oldham. Aggrey's answer flashed: "Yes, he's the man; I could work with him." Rather surprised at the readiness of this reply, Mr. Oldham asked: "What do you know of him?" Aggrey reminded him that two or three years before this he had spent an hour at luncheon in a restaurant with Mrs. Oldham, Dr. Jesse Jones and Mr. Fraser. "And you are prepared to risk your life with a man you met for an hour or two?" said Mr. Oldham. "Yes," was the unhesitating reply. That short encounter had given Aggrey a correct insight into Mr. Fraser's character—"I sized him up quickly," said he.

A telegram to Mr. Fraser, who was then at Oxford,

brought him to Chipstead that evening. Next day Fraser and Aggrey went out for a walk over the Surrey Downs —for the life of them they could never tell afterwards where they went, so absorbed were they in their talk. Aggrey waxed enthusiastic as he listened to Fraser's exposition of what Achimota might be, and should be. Fraser explained his own position. He had now decided to leave Ceylon and was considering a proposal that he should become Principal of a new College which the missionary societies were proposing to build in North India. Aggrey pressed him to go to Achimota, and finally Fraser agreed to do so if the North India scheme fell through. In that event they would go together, such was their compact, and make Achimota the best school in Africa.

Next day Mr. Oldham informed the Colonial Office that if Mr. Fraser were approached again he might reconsider his refusal, and they would get Aggrey with him. The offer was duly renewed, but Fraser declined it because the scheme as then presented did not appeal to him. Later on the Colonial Office made another offer and this time Fraser replied that he would give an answer in a month and named his conditions : that the school should begin with young children, that he should have a free hand in regard to religion, that African members of the staff should have an equal status with Europeans, and that, finally, he should choose his own staff. These conditions were accepted. Fraser wired to India asking whether the North India scheme were going through and naming a date by which he must have a reply. The Rev. William Paton, to whom the cable was addressed, was absent in Burma when it arrived and it was *posted* on to him. After a long delay he received it and wired a reply : " School going on, come." But it was too late ; the stipulated month had expired and two days before the cablegram arrived Fraser had accepted the Principalship of Achimota. He named Aggrey as the first member of his staff and as vice-principal.

Aggrey was in Africa by this time. On February 29th, 1924, he was asked by cable from the Secretary of State

whether, in the event of Fraser being appointed headmaster he would accept an influential senior position on the staff; and on March 12th his affirmative reply was received. On April 21st he was informed that the Secretary of State had approved his appointment, and on July 18th the formal letter of appointment was addressed to him. The appointment was made subject to the medical examination being satisfactory. Aggrey had no doubts on this score: "I am due fifty years more," he said.

In spite of Mr. Fraser's request, Aggrey was not made vice-principal. The objection was raised that the Vice, who would on occasion have to take his Chief's place, should be a man of proved administrative ability. Later, when the staff was organised, the Rev. R. C. Blumer, B.Sc., M.A., who had worked with Fraser at Kandy, became vice-principal and Aggrey assistant vice-principal. Sir Gordon Guggisberg had insisted all along that he should have a commanding position, because of his abilities and also in order to give him prestige and as an earnest of the Government's intention to make Achimota a thoroughly African institution.

Thus it was that these three men were brought together—Sir Gordon from England, Mr. Fraser from Ceylon, Aggrey from America—at a critical moment in the history of the Gold Coast. It is no wonder that they, and others, traced in the event the guiding hand of God.

Aggrey, as we have seen, returned to England from Africa in July, 1924. He paid a hurried visit to his family in America, and in September was back in London.

It was at that time I met him first. A conference of men and women interested in Africa met on September 8th at High Leigh, and Fraser and Aggrey were present. I am free to confess that the little I had heard, and the much I had imagined, about Aggrey had not predisposed my mind in his favour. I had been astonished that

he should be a member of the Commissions. It was not because he was an African ; but I fancied that an African who had been absent for twenty years in America would be out of touch and sympathy with his own people and would be eager to introduce American ideas into Africa —and at that time I strongly objected to Americanising Africa. I must hasten to add that these prejudices vanished as soon as I came to know Aggrey. Like others, I was impressed at High Leigh by his unassuming manner. He spoke rarely in the Conference, and usually only when invited to speak, but every word told. If I had known then that I was to write his biography I should have made full notes of what he said. I remember his rather diffident demeanour, his ready wit, his sound sense, but I have only fragmentary records of his words, such as follow :

> The natives of Africa are awake : the question is, will our guardians measure up to our expectations ? . . . We Africans do not know the difference between religion and business. . . . Eliminate by substitution. . . . If you cut us, we get excited. . . . Strengthen the hereditary chiefs. . . . . We don't want education that does not produce character. . . . The Christian man who comes among us must be one of us. . . . It is only Christians who meet together like this to criticise themselves to see how they can serve us better. . . . No first-class educated African wants to be a white man. . . . Every educated Negro wants to be a first-class Negro, not a third-class European. . . . The superiority complex is doing a tremendous lot of mischief in Africa. . . . When I am worried, I go on my knees and I talk to God in my own tongue. . . . I plead with the Christian Church to make Africa the first Christian continent. . . . For God's sake give Africa Christian leaders.

Such sentiments went straight to my heart. The man fascinated me. I saw in him my dearest hopes for Africa realised. From that time we were friends.

It was out of that Conference at High Leigh that the Le Zoute Conference of 1926 grew, and also the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures.

One day in September Aggrey called at the headquarters of the Student Christian Movement in London. The General Committee was in session and he was introduced. He came into the room, as Canon Tissington Tatlow wrote afterwards, "a perfect avalanche of personality," and in that private meeting of about fifty people he poured out his soul for Africa, "all courage, wit, insight and friendliness." He thrilled them with the greatness of the Achimota project. That meeting did much to stimulate the African Education Group—a company of S.C.M. members purposing to offer themselves for educational work in Africa.

On September 19th Aggrey addressed the Union of Students of African descent in London: "the speech was an amazing performance," said one who was there. On the 23rd he addressed the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Committee in the morning, and in the afternoon a special gathering of "Friends." In the evening he delivered the valedictory address to Wesleyan missionaries in Kingsway Hall: "My word," said a listener, "some missionary subscribers are getting their money's worth to-night." Aggrey spoke with winsome grace on his debt to missionaries. The meeting closed at nine, but it was ten o'clock before the Rev. W. T. Balmer could rescue him from the crowd that clustered around him and carry him off to his home. Next day Aggrey went down to Gainsborough to visit his old friend and teacher, the Rev. Dennis Kemp. "He made me feel not a little uncomfortable," writes Mr. Kemp, "when I met him at the station and he stood for a moment or two bareheaded. I begged him to do no such thing. He laughed and begged me to ignore his title and just to regard him as my old James. He had had invitations to spend the last week-end with other friends, including one from a Bishop; but he would rather come to us—'my home,' said he." He preached next day, and the Methodists of Gainsborough had a great time.

On September 26th the Association of Coloured Peoples bade Mr. Fraser and Aggrey Godspeed at a

remarkable meeting held in Christ Church, Endell Street, London.

THE party sailed from Liverpool in s.s. *Adda* on October 1st. It consisted of Mr. Fraser, his son "Sandy," Mr. F. R. Irvine, a trained agriculturist who had taught at Hampton Institute, Mr. W. E. Ward, an Oxford graduate, Mr. C. J. Phillips, the bursar, and Aggrey. On the voyage they gathered daily for language study, with Aggrey as their teacher. At Freetown and Sekondi, the only two ports at which the *Adda* called, deputations of Africans gave Aggrey a great reception. On their arrival at Accra the party were welcomed heartily by all, from the Governor downwards.

An incident occurred which might have had very untoward results. The European masters were directed to proceed to Liver House, in the quarter of the town reserved for Europeans and their servants. The Governor intended that Aggrey should lodge with his colleagues, but a minor official quartered him elsewhere. The African clerks in the office knew that this discrimination was being made—and they watched to see what would happen. Mr. Fraser was the last man in the world to suffer any indignity offered to a colleague. Putting a blind eye to the signal, he carried Aggrey off with him to Liver House, and for some time they shared a room together. This action saved the situation.

Three days after landing Aggrey wrote to the Chief of Cape Coast—his Chief.

To CHIEF COKER. Accra
October 18th, 1924.

This is to inform you that I landed in Accra last Wednesday, the 15th inst., to help in the educational uplift of our beloved country. . . . I return at the urgent call of my native country to give her my very best, also as God gives me to see the best. You will remember that when you as

Tufuhin, Cape Coast, swore me into the position of *Safuhin* of *Brofumba*, three times I swore that if at any time my country needed me, and she called upon me, and I failed to come, might the worst happen to me. I took that oath in all seriousness. Anamabu too called me into my father's position, and Edwumaku and Denkyira and Efiefi would have followed suit if they had [had] the opportunity to put me into my maternal uncle's places. In obedience to my country's call and my God's mission I come. I come on my knees in deepest humility, praying the Great Architect of the Universe that I may see light as I serve my race, in spite of cowans and eavesdroppers. But I feel that I cannot do my best without the advice, counsel, constructive criticism and whole-hearted co-operation of my people, of men like you, Chief Coker, who do not only know education but also understand it, and can help me insist on the best in our own national culture and remarkable traditions, as well as the best, the very highest and best, that Western civilisation has to offer. I should feel very happy if I can count on such help from you. I believe you will help me. Our country needs you and your wide experiences. . . . The Principal is a godsend to Africa. He wants the very best for Africa, and he can insist on the best if we unite to back him. He and I are working hand in hand. We consult each other on all important matters. Both of us desire and ask the whole-hearted advice, counsel, constructive criticism and co-operation of all loyal Africans, because Achimota is destined to be *the* University for Africa. In order to represent my people I must know what they want, and I cannot know what they want unless they tell me. . . . It is exactly four years ago to-day, the 18th, my birthday, that I spent in Cape Coast, and I am back again. On this the return of my birthday, I once more reconsecrate myself, my talents and my whole life to the service of my God and His and our beloved Africa.

God bless you, gallant Tufuhin, and believe me to remain,

Yours for the mother country,

J. E. Kwegyir Aggrey.

The foundation stone of Achimota had been laid six months previously, but the construction was only now beginning. Much time was to elapse before the staff could begin to teach. But Mr. Fraser had rightly insisted that

before the masters could begin to teach they must learn. His intention was that they should live among the people, master the languages and become acquainted with traditions and customs and the whole world of thought before they gave a single lesson, thus acting on the principle that if you are to teach Jack arithmetic you must know Jack as well as arithmetic. Accordingly, as men and women arrived—all carefully selected from the Universities and various callings—they were generally sent out into the country to live and study. Mr. Fraser busied himself with working out his plans, and his considerable experience was also enlisted in reforming the general educational system of the Colony. Aggrey's work was also marked out. It was for him to introduce Mr. Fraser and his colleagues to the people, to expound the principles on which Achimota was to be run, and to win for them the enthusiastic support of his fellow-countrymen. His origin and position made him, of course, the ideal person for this task. Once again he took up his rôle of interpreter.

It was inevitable that he should experience some amount of disillusionment as he came into contact with his people ; distance had lent enchantment to the view. Many of their habits and customs gave him pain. He sorrowed to find one young relative growing into debauchery, and another, a professing Christian, supporting two wives. Under his influence they reformed. Other members of the family gave him anxiety : " these children and grandchildren are shortening my mother's life," he wrote some months later. Constant demands were made upon his purse. True to the African sense of family obligation, Aggrey cheerfully paid what was required, but the strain was very great ; his relations and friends seemed to think that his resources as a Government servant were limitless. Aggrey was anxious to build a house for his mother, and was disgusted to find that the price of the land was immediately raised against him. Negotiations were drawn out for two years and more.

A short time after their arrival Aggrey accompanied

Mr. Fraser and other colleagues on a tour, and on their return to Accra found that their rooms had been burgled. The dinner service which the staff held in common had been taken, Mr. Fraser's clothes, and most of Aggrey's kit, as well as two precious manuscripts which it had taken him years to prepare. Some time before this Aggrey had received a letter of good cheer from his friend, Mr. A. W. Wilkie, in which he related how his mother used to say, " I'm bearing you up." " We are bearing you up," Mr. Wilkie wrote. Aggrey treasured that letter against his heart as if it were a charm, and he grieved that by some ill chance he had left it behind and that the burglar had carried it off. This incident was humiliating to the proud soul of Aggrey because it lowered his people in the eyes of his colleagues. It did not stand alone, moreover, for thieving was the darling sin of their first house servants, and every member of the staff suffered.

There was disappointment, too, in regard to the attitude of many of the people towards Achimota. He believed so thoroughly in the Governor and in the new scheme that it came as a terrible shock to discover that few of the leading men shared his enthusiasm. He was not long in discovering that the situation was one that needed all his wisdom and persuasive powers to tackle. No African Colony has ever had a more devoted Governor than Sir Gordon Guggisberg, a prodigious worker and a true friend of the people. But at this time he was very unpopular in many quarters, his motives were impugned, his actions misconstrued. These misrepresentations of the Governor and Achimota originated largely not with Africans, but with Europeans.

But many Africans were angry because Achimota was not immediately to be an Oxford or a Cambridge, where their sons could win degrees. It was indeed intended to flower into a University in due course, but the time for that was not yet come. People did not see the necessity for waiting. Why start a school, if it is to be only a school, on such a large scale; why not begin with a

single room? Why send men out, on huge salaries, to idle about doing nothing? Study local conditions! They are not here to teach local conditions, but universal subjects like science! Learn the vernacular so as to be able to teach it? We do not need Englishmen to teach us the vernacular; we know it, and besides there are no books in our languages; we want English. So they talked. The Africanism of the new school found many opponents. Echoes of the long educational controversy were wafted over from America. Many supposed that the fresh policy was a machiavellian effort to palm off an inferior education upon the Africans—something that white people would not tolerate for themselves. They spoke as if education as practised in England were the last word on the subject, not realising that Achimota was planned to give them education of a superior quality.

Sir Gordon Guggisberg was sometimes grieved but never discouraged by the attacks made upon him and his plans. He knew that Aggrey had a difficult furrow to plough and told him to come for counsel whenever he wished. Aggrey visited him frequently and never failed to refresh him by his optimism. He believed in his people, and was confident that they only needed to have Achimota explained to them and they would be won for its ideals. With every ounce of his energy he threw himself into the task before him.

On November 12th the Cosmo Literary Club of Accra, a very influential institution, invited the élite to a reception in Aggrey's honour. The Hon. Casely Hayford, M.B.E., vice-president of the British West African National Congress, presided. After several speeches had been made, an illuminated address was read and presented to the guest. In accordance with local custom, Aggrey rose to thank the donors. "It is almost impossible," said *The Gold Coast Leader* in reporting the address, "that any man can be in the company of Dr. Aggrey without learning something new. He appears to be the *Philosopher's Stone* which men seek for wisdom." He told the story of the Sleeping Beauty and of Prince Charming

who kissed her into wakefulness. So, he proceeded, secondary education had slumbered for long years on the Gold Coast. He recalled the names of eminent scholars which the country had produced in the past: Anthony Amoo, who for thirty years taught in the University of Wittenberg, Attobra Kojo Enu, who wrote Latin dissertations. But none of these had succeeded in arousing the Sleeping Beauty; but now Achimota was coming and Ethiopia would suddenly stretch forth her hand to God. He went on to draw his favourite parable of Africa as an interrogation mark, asking in reply to many queries, Is that so? . . . And the meeting broke up with everybody asking the same question, Is that so?

In the next few months he put that question in regard to the objections raised against Achimota and the criticisms against the Governor.

On November 15th the Ladies' Section of the British West African Congress gave a reception in honour of the Achimota staff at the Roger Club in Accra. The Governor was there, the Bishop, high Government officials and the leading African citizens, including many barristers-at-law. African Chiefs and Councillors came dressed in their rich robes. Speeches were made by the Chairman, an African notable, by Principal Fraser, by the Governor, by the Director of Education. When it came to Aggrey's turn he told an exceedingly dull story, and told it in the dullest way imaginable. It was all about a bitter man who was jealous of a young couple deeply in love. He went to the husband and told tales about the wife. "You only half believe," said the jealous man in conclusion. "Well, when you go home to-night, act as if you were sulky; don't talk; go to bed early and pretend to sleep, and you will see that she will try to kill you." Then he went to the wife and persuaded her that a white witch had cast a spell over her husband and that he hated her. If she wished to break the spell she must wait till he was asleep and then take a razor from the moonlight and lay it gently against his cheek. Both did as advised. The husband saw his wife advancing with the razor, sprang up, and knocked

her down. Explanations followed and reconciliation. . . . The dull story dragged out its seemingly interminable length until every listener was bored to death. Principal Fraser listened in amazement : " You've missed the boat for once, my son," he thought. Others were saying, " Is this the brilliant orator ? " But it was Aggrey's artistry. Suddenly he came to life. His voice lost its monotony and rang out full and clear. " See to it, you, that you allow no bitter mischief-makers to come between you and your Governor ! " The effect was dramatic. The whole place rocked with laughter and cheers. " He just swings his audiences as he pleases," said Principal Fraser.

Aggrey gave of his strength generously in the ensuing months. He wrote letters to leading men, he interviewed others, he addressed crowded meetings, all with one object. He was personally popular and visitors thronged his quarters. After a long day somebody would call to see him just as he was going to bed, perhaps for some trivial purpose. Principal Fraser would say : "Aggrey, you darned fool, go to bed, see him to-morrow." But Aggrey would reply : " No, I must see him now ; he will sleep better if he has a talk with me." He toured the country, partly to visit the schools, chiefly to interpret Achimota.

The Chiefs called in their people from miles around to hear Aggrey talk about the new college. In one town a special building was erected in the market-place, and when Aggrey had made his speech there, he was adopted as a son of the town. It came on to rain and the Chief said : " This is God's rain to make Dr. Aggrey's seeds grow."

One of his first visits, in company with Principal Fraser, was to Nana (now Sir) Ofori Atta, one of the most important of the Paramount Chiefs and a very able, educated man. They were received in state. The Chief was wearing a toga of thick silk ; on his head was a fillet of gold, and on his hands rings of plain gold. Thick bracelets of the same metal, to which ancient aggrey

beads were attached, encircled his arms. The Queen-Mother was there, with other chiefs and councillors, linguists and drummers. The Chief speaks excellent English, but it was not etiquette for him to address, or be addressed directly by, his visitors. The linguist interpreted in Tshi. After the official ceremony, the Chief received his visitors in his drawing-room, offered them cigars and talked freely.

Recalling on a later occasion another visit, Sir Ofori Atta said: "I remember Aggrey visited Somanya when the Provincial Council of the Eastern Province was in session, and he made such an eloquent speech that the whole of the Chiefs and people assembled were deeply impressed with the objects of Achimota, and everyone made up his mind to send his boy or nephew to Achimota."

At Cape Coast, the intellectual centre of the Colony, the opposition to Achimota and the Governor was strongest. Aggrey gallantly faced the music; during a visit lasting a fortnight he made thirty-three speeches and had daily interviews with all and sundry. He caused a revulsion of feeling. Some time later it was rumoured that the Governor was to pass through the town without stopping. The people wished him to remain and he spent three days in their midst, receiving a most cordial welcome. It was on this occasion that, in his gracious way, he visited Aggrey's mother in state and begged her to adopt him as her son.

Aggrey's visit to Cape Coast was for him overclouded by the death of his favourite sister, Abonyiwa, which had occurred some time before. Otherwise it was a joyful meeting between mother and son. He came away rather hurt because the family was inclined to treat him as a fine gentleman. He wrote to his nephew, Abonyiwa's son, about it.

To his nephew, APPIAH. Accra,
December 9th, 1924.

Tell mother when I come again I don't want any expense on her part. Neither she nor Kwegyirba must go to any

DR. AND MRS. AGGREY WITH SIR OFORI ATTA (IN THE CENTRE) AND MEMBERS OF HIS RETINUE AT ACCRA

expense at all. Mother went to enough expense when she nursed me as an infant, attended me as a child, and she, your mother and Kwegyirba cooked for me. All I shall want is, sometimes I shall want her to cook me *nkatsi nkwan na dwiu fufu*,* or *adzifroyi na itsiu*,† or *abe nkwan*,‡ or pancake like Araba Abonyiwa used to make for me, or *brodsi mimin froyi na nkatsi*.§ When I want these I shall give her or Kwegyirba extra money for it. I want to eat the cooking of my mother and sisters once more. I want to feel myself a child again. I would give anything to have Abonyiwa back to-day. But God knows best and I must not repine.

Please remind my mother and Kwegyirba that they must not call me "*mu wura*" [my master]. I am not *hon wura* [their master]. No matter what honours come to me, to my mother I am always her son, and to my sisters their brother. I want my mother still to call me as she used to do when I was here: "Kodwo Mensa," and Kwegyirba and Akyiniba "Kwensa," a short name for Kodwo Mensa, just as Bob is short for Robert and Jim for James. Or talking to me, I want my mother simply to call me "Kodwo," and thus also my sisters. Kodwo, Kwensa and Kodwo Mensa sound sweeter in my ear than any other name. They have the sound and flavour of Home, sweet Home, of mother and of sister.

In Cape Coast and Saltpond I met many who still called me "Teacher Aggrey." I liked it, because it brought to me memories of the days when all called me "Teacher Aggrey." I want *them* to keep on calling me "Teacher Aggrey."

I imagine you coming to me and calling me Dr. Aggrey! That may be all right when with others and meeting on official matters, but I prefer from you "Uncle," or "Wofa," when you and I are by ourselves.

At the beginning of January, 1925, Aggrey went for a tour through the Western Province and was enthusiastically welcomed everywhere. At Sekondi an address was presented to him by the Central Literary Club, an association of youths whose aim was the study of literature. Aggrey talked to them about Achimota and aroused their keen interest; one of the speakers who followed ex-

* Ground-nut soup and yam pudding. † Stew and corn-ball.
‡ Palm oil soup. § Red plantain stew and ground-nuts.

claimed in his zeal: "We hope by the help of God to found through it a new civilisation for the whole world!" With his ardent appreciation of the efforts of youth, Aggrey offered to become Patron of the Club. The secretary tells me that whenever Aggrey came to Sekondi he would visit the young members in their homes and encourage them in their efforts of self-culture. After his lectures at the Club, a crowd of youngsters would accompany him to his lodging, asking and answering questions, "as he solved the so many problems put to him by them."

Aggrey attended the Wesleyan Synod and made a powerful plea at a public meeting for the education of women. Then he went on to Tarkwa, where in the evening he lectured for two hours to an audience of Whites and Blacks—the meeting lasted from eight to midnight. Next day he lectured again in the Roman Catholic school under the auspices of the Optimism Club, and on the Wednesday preached "a thrilling and instructive sermon" in the Wesleyan Church. "Dr. Aggrey's praises are the theme of all conversation here," wrote a correspondent of *The Gold Coast Times*. From Tarkwa he went on to Kumasi and then returned to Accra.

The day after his return he set off for Cape Coast again with Bishop Alleyne of the Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. Dissatisfied with one thing or another, the local Conference of that Church had decided in April, 1924, to sever itself from the parent body in America and to pursue its own path independently as the West African National Methodist Episcopal Church. The members, however, split into two groups. Bishop Alleyne, an old friend of Aggrey, came out to the Gold Coast for the purpose of healing the breach. Aggrey presided at a meeting held in Cape Coast, and largely by his persuasive eloquence and tact succeeded in bringing peace and union among the different parties.

Aggrey, while he was a loyal Methodist, had little or no denominational feeling. He was content to be simply a Christian. During Lent this year he preached twice every Wednesday evening at Holy Trinity Church, Accra.

During the Prince of Wales' tour in West Africa H.R.H. visited Achimota, and in the presence of 5,000 children drawn up before the main building (whose walls were now twelve feet high), unveiled a beautiful brass plate affixed to one of the portals. This proclaimed that, by H.R.H.'s gracious permission, the School and College were to be known by his name. The visit was a great success. " The Prince of Wales has come and gone," wrote Aggrey on May 16th. " When I was officially presented to him by the Governor he chatted a long time with me, in fact so long that the local papers noted the length and all seemed proud that the Prince gave so much time to me their representative."

At the beginning of July Aggrey sailed for England. On the boat he wrote his friend Roy, reviewing the events of the past few months.

To Mr. Roy. R.M.S. *Abinsi*,
July 15th, 1925.

You and Dr. Jones and Dr. Stokes have not heard very often from me directly, but the faith you all have in me has been a motive power, and I have tried to do my little bit. You will remember the deep moving and soul-stirring prayer Dr. Stokes prayed that evening. It was a war charge—it was like the handing of a nation's colours to me. Far on the ringing plains of windy Africa when the battle for co-operation thickened, that prayer still rang in my ears.

Dr. Jones would not go to the station in London to see me off. He wrote a very touching letter, which only a Jones can write, and in his own handwriting. He was afraid he might create a scene. When I read that letter I created a scene—I sought shelter in the bosom of a large pocket handkerchief. He said, " Stand by Sir Gordon."

Thinking of Dr. Stokes's prayer and letter, of Dr. Giddings' recommendation, of Dr. Jones's letter, and of you and all of you, I prayed God to help me. I said within myself every time I got up from my knees, " With God's help I will bring back the colours with honour, or else report to Him the reason why."

I cannot go into details, but briefly I have been busy. When we landed we met strong editorials against Sir Gordon

and against the staff. Mr. Fraser called my attention to them and remarked that he thought I had said I could get my people to co-operate and understand. It was the very week we landed. The air was tense. The very next week, while we were all away to Koforidua, I experienced my first real baptism of fire—all my things were stolen, including 9 suits, 25 shirts, trunks, a brand new suit-case, and £6 11s. in cash. They left one old trunk and my visiting cards. Rev. Fraser also lost heavily. I happened to have taken with me the black suit I bought before I married, twenty years ago! But instead of discouraging me—for I lost very heavily—I can never restore some of the valuables stolen, much less those above value—I determined not to let up, but move on to success.

All the staff stayed in a double large two storey bungalow and boarded together. We met together every morning for prayers before breakfast. The criticisms thickened. Where we were living was half an hour's walk from the post office, the heart of the city. I walked to the city every day. I found that I had to work hard, but I love to work, and when working I had not much respect for food. Several days I ate only once a day and returned to sleep at 10.30 p.m. or later. Soon sentiment changed. *The Gold Coast Leader* led, *The Independent* followed, *The Vox Populi*,* *The Times*, and *The Eastern Star* and *Akwapim News* joined. I met key men. I was willing to be convinced, and as they knew me and my record and family lines we talked freely. Sir Gordon stood by me. Fraser is genuine. Mr. Oman [the Director of Education] helped. I saw Nana Ofori Atta, Nene Mate Kole of Odumase, Nana Essandoh III of Nkusukum, Lawyer Casely Hayford, Lawyer E. J. P. Brown, Lawyer J. Glover Addo, unofficial members of the Legislative Council, and all saw with me. I think I know my people. . . .

Sir Gordon is very appreciative of the complete change and has frankly admitted it, for on page 210 of the Legislative Address, copies of which I had sent to the office, he says, among other things, after expressing thankfulness for the change: "One has only to read the local papers to see that.

* The editor of *Vox Populi* wrote Aggrey on July 4th: "Personally I have been a vigorous and blatant critic of Sir Gordon, but I have been constrained by facts to bow and do obeisance to his 'big soul.' . . . Hats off to him and ungrudgingly let us offer him our oil of sympathy and petroleum of enthusiasm and co-operation."

Criticism there still is, and long may it continue, for it is a healthy sign, but the old pages devoted to wholesale abuse and destructive criticism have given way to well written columns containing really valuable and constructive proposals. To my mind this is one of the most important things that has happened in the year."

This has so inspired Sir Gordon that although this is his last year he has been given extension at his request, has refused Nigeria with £1,500 more salary a year.* And at the Legislative [Council] the unofficial members unanimously backed him, and led by Casely Hayford stated that they would move for a continuity of policy, meaning if the extension were not granted they would petition the Secretary of State to have him returned. This is the first time in the history of Gold Coast this has happened.

I am on my way to London to help state the case for women's education. This sea trip is the first rest I have had since I landed in Africa. Sir Gordon says I work so hard and do so much walking, if I would buy a car he would have me granted upkeep allowance, but where is the money? . . .

On his arrival in England, Aggrey found the following letter awaiting him. Mr. Fraser had preceded him in May.

From PRINCIPAL FRASER.

My very dear Aggrey,

Welcome to our shores. Unfortunately, my son, we cannot meet at once. For my wife has been ill. . . . Here I have had more work by far than on the Gold Coast. I have now over 40 of staff selected, and they will rejoice your heart. Of course they don't all come at once, but I have taken 17 passages for September 30th, the *Adda*, and include you and Mrs. Aggrey and my wife and myself amongst them. Will that suit you? . . . You had better prepare to lecture on language frequently and well. They will want at least 10 lessons if the weather is good, and say 7 or 8 if Biscay and the Channel are bad. Our boat is the *Adda*, and our cabins are taken all together in the middle of the ship on deck B. . . .

Cheerio, my son. I want to meet you once more, and that soon.

* Aggrey mixed up facts here. Sir Gordon was offered another Colony, but preferred to stay in the Gold Coast to complete some unfinished tasks.

CHAPTER XV

TOIL AND SUCCESS

AGGREY had no rest during his brief stay in England. As soon as he landed he was invited by telegraph to attend the second General Conference of the Student Christian Movement at Swanwick. He went down on the Saturday and in the evening was carried off to have dinner with the three hundred women. Custom demands on such occasions that the distinguished male guest shout a funny story above the clatter of cutlery. Aggrey came through the ordeal successfully by telling several witty anecdotes, but, says one who was there, " It is his voice and the sunshiny humour of his expression as he told them that will remain in the memory long after the stories have gone." He became then, as always, immensely popular among the students. Many of them had never before spoken to a Negro, and the skilful way in which he took the initiative in helping them to feel at home with him was most interesting to watch. He said more than once to the Rev. Tissington Tatlow, the General Secretary, " They are not accustomed to my black face and I have got to help them not to be shy." He did this by chaffing the small groups that gathered round him while he poured out a fascinating stream of talk about Africa and his people. " Don't be timid about asking me questions," he would say. " I am more embarrassed than you are by this meeting ; if it was not for my black face, you would see that I am blushing almost all the time ! " The result was that when he came on to the platform and faced his audience of six or seven hundred students he had already forged a sympathetic link with them, and he held them spellbound in a way, says Tissing-

ton Tatlow, "I have never seen any white speaker achieve to the same degree."

Aggrey spoke in the big tent on Sunday morning. This was probably the most memorable of all the meetings, wrote the Rev. J. W. Woodhouse. "It was the best thing I have heard on the relationships between 'white and black,' delivered with that vivacity, directness and humour which makes his personality almost unique. It began at 9.30 a.m., but I am told it had barely finished by midnight, such were the multitude of questioners."

He was as popular with the women as with the men. Miss Mary Dick, of Cape Town University, writes to me as follows: "Dr. Aggrey was generally spoken of as 'the African.' And I remember when several of us were standing talking with him in the dark a student passing by said to his friend, 'Oh, there's the African; you can see him by his teeth.' We were awfully delighted at the amused way in which Dr. Aggrey overheard the remark. He was so new and fresh and seemed so young and keen."

"I felt impelled," continues Miss Dick, "to speak to him privately because he was of Africa, and the memory of that short talk will remain an inspiration for ever. His character and personality, and the way in which he spoke of 'my people' caused the ambition of doing 'a black job' to be born in me—it was he who pointed my way of life."

There are others who might say the same. Many a student made up his mind to go to Africa after he had heard Aggrey.

In London Aggrey addressed meetings at the Church Missionary House, Salisbury Square. "I pled for my sisters, African womanhood, both morning and evening," he wrote. Principal Fraser was there too, and together they went down to Oxford to speak to eight hundred enthusiasts gathered for the C.M.S. Summer Holiday School.

But the main purpose of the visit to England was to confer with the Advisory Committee at the Colonial Office in regard to extending the scope of Achimota so as

to include girls. " London saw me very, very busy," he wrote to one of his nephews. " His Excellency, Principal Fraser and your uncle succeeded in practically all we came for. If Gold Coast does not go forward it will not be because her opportunity has not come. It has. . . . Sir Gordon and the Committee are standing squarely by us. We have now £502,000 for Achimota University College in order to give larger opportunities for the sons and daughters of the New Africa."

In August, 1925, Aggrey sailed for America in s.s. *Majestic* and happily rejoined his wife and family at Salisbury. Mrs. Aggrey was to accompany him back to the Gold Coast, but their son and daughters were to remain in America, and he busied himself to place them at College and University. " I have had my hands, head and heart all full and overflowing since I arrived home," he wrote his friend Roy, " but I am, like the English, ' muddling through,' where light and prevision are not present."

Financial matters troubled him. The man who held a mortgage of £800 on his house and furniture wanted the money, and to raise it Aggrey had to sell his farm and other property at considerable loss—he said he lost over £1,700. A white citizen who had offered him only 15 dollars an acre returned a few minutes after Aggrey had sold the property to another and offered him thirty-five, which was much more than he had obtained. " You can refuse to sign the deed, or you can offer him 200 dollars for his deal—I want the land," said the white man. But Aggrey refused : " My word's my bond," said he.

Aggrey packed up and dispatched to Achimota about 2,000 volumes from his library.

On October 17th, 1925, Dr. and Mrs. Aggrey sailed in s.s. *Cedric* for England. The first Sunday in November hundreds of thousands of people heard their voices, for Aggrey broadcasted a talk on Achimota—" the most significant thing in Africa to-day "—and since his voice did not carry effectively, Mrs. Aggrey read the greater part of his address.

On November 11th they left Liverpool in R.M.S. *Aba* for the Gold Coast. That day Aggrey wrote as follows :

To Dr. Jesse Jones. R.M.S. *Aba*,
November 11th, 1925.

As her child Nature told me many things through intuition of the future, and some of them have already come true. She is telling me more. The end is not yet. Africa is going through an educational revolution. . . . Five years ago not many thought seriously about Africa along other lines than purely missionary adventures. To-day many are every year going to America to study her schools in order to benefit Africa. Thinking of it all, I am grateful to exclaim, " What hath God wrought ! "

Mrs. Aggrey has stood the trip very well, and kind friends have helped most definitely to allay many fears and forebodings. Friends of both races met us at Liverpool and went with us to London. And friends took us through the country from London to Liverpool. Our broadcasting seems to have been quite a success.

November 8th was the twentieth anniversary of our wedding, and some twenty-one ladies and gentlemen, including us and four other persons of African descent, sat down to a sumptuous dinner at Hotel Russell. We felt very grateful. The after dinner speeches were inspiring. The manager of the hotel and his wife were present and paid us very generous compliments. The white friends footed the entire bill and my responsibilities were increased to see busy and well-connected men putting aside business and motoring several miles to attend the dinner in our honour and saying the kind things they said. Mrs. Aggrey likes London and she goes forth very encouraged.

When they reached Accra the Aggreys were met by an enthusiastic crowd. Mrs. Aggrey was now the chief attraction. News was brought of the death of a relative at Cape Coast, and Aggrey planned to leave next morning to attend the obsequial rites. Visitors delayed their start and along the road the car was held up repeatedly by people who were anxious to talk to them. It was very late when they reached Cape Coast that night. Still suffering from the fatigues of the voyage and the journey by

road, Mrs. Aggrey was given her first sight and hearing of an African wake, and very noisy and unpleasant it seemed to her. I am afraid that Aggrey never realised the shock that would be caused by her first contact with African life, so very different from anything she had been accustomed to. Back at Accra, their house at Achimota not being ready, they were placed in a building which not only proved to be damp, but had the reputation of being haunted. The servants were incompetent, undisciplined, thievish. They would whisper to their mistress : " Do not look out of that window after dark, you will see five men with their heads off." As soon as possible, Mr. and Mrs. Aggrey removed to another dwelling. The season was extraordinarily hot—people had not known one like it for twenty-five years. All these things preyed upon Mrs. Aggrey's health. In April, 1926, she was compelled to return to America, where in July her baby was born.

Aggrey hoped that his wife would be able to rejoin him, but as the time went on, it came home to him that this would not happen. He was then assailed by the temptation to abandon his work on the Gold Coast, but he shook it off. After a year of separation he wrote to Mrs. Aggrey : " I am almost afraid to say your absence makes it *very hard for me* for fear you might misunderstand me—and yet I do miss you, whether you ever come out again or not. I understand your position and the children's too. I believe I do. But sacrifice is called for and only sacrifice will save the Race, will save Africa, and God has laid His hands on me. I will not refuse His command, His call. I cannot, must not, be disobedient to the holy vision. I dare not." And later again to his friend Dr. Jesse Jones : " I trust in the Lord. He has placed so much confidence in me that I do not want to disappoint Him. He alone knows how painfully I miss my family. I dearly wish I could have them with me in Africa, but at present this seems impossible. The call of my native country rings loudly in my ears and its mission lies heavily on my heart, and then there is so much unneces-

WHERE DR. AND MRS. AGGREY LIVED IN ACCRA

Photo by F. R. C. Luttesall

sary misunderstanding. Men have given up personal comfort and happiness for less than service to God and country."

Principal Fraser had returned to the Gold Coast in October, 1925, with twelve recruits ; not counting wives, the staff now numbered nineteen. Unfortunately the contractors had resigned and until the Public Works Department, which took over the building, could make a start on this the biggest task it had as yet undertaken, there were vexatious delays. Fortunately, the Governor was in earnest and he pushed things on.

Aggrey's relations with the picked men and women who were his colleagues were of the friendliest nature. Some of them were, perhaps, inclined at first to regard him as the Principal's pet. Hardly any of them had worked with Africans previously, and Aggrey was rather a mystery to them. Not one of them, it should be said, had any feeling against his colour or against his being in a superior status officially. They chaffed him about his degrees, and Aggrey at times felt that they rather despised these because gained in American colleges. In February, 1926, he was writing to a Correspondence College in England, saying that he was desirous of reading for four Honours degrees, B.Sc. in Economics, Ph.D., M.A. in Education, and B.D., and would take the examinations during his furloughs. But while they might chaff him good-humouredly, they quickly realised that he held his high position on the staff, not as a mere concession to African opinion, but because he was peerless in it. Sometimes they were irritated by his lack of punctuality and apparent lack of practical sense, but they came to see the majesty of the man and loved him with all his faults—which were not many. What they took to be indifference to time was really his intense absorption in things which he regarded as more important. It is true, no doubt, that

he did not concern himself with details of administration. He was, I suppose, a dreamer. He needed some man to interpret his visions and put them into practicable shape, and this interpreter he found in his Principal, with whom he never had any serious division of opinion. " As for Fraser," he wrote, " in him Africa has a Godsend." That Aggrey had his limitations is true—who is without them ? But he did at Achimota what no other man could have done. " I have often been asked," said Mr. Fraser, " if Aggrey was worth his high place on my staff. He was much more than worth it. If Achimota has caught the imaginations of West Africa to-day, and I believe it has, it is due to Aggrey more than to any other six men."

Although the school was still a-building, the staff was not idle. They were laying a firm foundation for the future by learning the language and ways of the people. And some of them now found opportunities to teach. Rignell, a very human ex-sergeant-major in the Scots Guards, who had been with Mr. Fraser in Ceylon, began drilling the boys of the Government School at Accra—drilled them in a fashion that excited the astonishment and admiration of all. " Shun ! " he roared at the awkward squad at 6.30 one morning. A boy failed to stand properly and beamed at the sergeant-major when he fixed his eyes upon him. " Here, you," said the heartless giant, " wipe that smile off your silly face. You're not a schoolgirl any longer and I've a stick in there." Rignell excelled in making drill an educative and character-forming exercise.

The Government Training College in Accra was now handed over to the Achimota staff, and Aggrey took up again his rôle as pedagogue. He was a brilliant teacher, full of fire and imagination ; he showed a perfect understanding of his pupils ; his knowledge was part of himself, and he had the ability to make every subject interesting. To be present in his class-room was to realise what teaching could be. For the sheer pleasure of listening to Aggrey, Sir Gordon Guggisberg would occasionally stand outside the open window, where he could not

be seen. One day he paid a surprise visit to the class-room, seated himself at the back and signalled to Aggrey to proceed without taking notice of his presence. Aggrey was teaching history that morning, a lesson based on local happenings and custom. The Governor was thrilled. " If I had had history taught to me like that," he said to me, " I should know something about it ! "

One day nine women who were being trained as teacher-matrons went on strike. They were subject to too much supervision by Europeans, they said. Mr. Fraser asked Aggrey to remember their discontent the next time he took them in class. So he related to them the story of Napoleon's crowning victory of Austerlitz—the battle of which the conqueror was most proud ; how on that cloudy December morning Napoleon had told his veterans that some would live to a ripe old age and would never boast of anything so much as having seen the sun rise on Austerlitz. Then Aggrey said : " Girls, you now see the clouds and are troubled, but you are privileged to see the sun rise on the hope of our race, Achimota, and in days to come, when you are old and grey, you will say, ' I was there when the sun dawned, I was in the forefront of the battle fought and won at Achimota ! ' " That speech banished their discontent. " Well, well, how is it to-day ? " he would afterwards shout to them in his cheerful way ; and they would answer : "Achimota's sun is rising ! " " No European could get that result so rapidly," remarked Mr. Fraser. " They are proud of his ability, absolutely trust his character, and love the friendliness of him."

The periods in which Aggrey taught were the " red-letter " periods of the week for the students. He used also to preach to them on Sunday evenings, and I am told that they cared not to eat before nor to sleep after these sermons, but remained in the darkness till the early morning, excitedly discussing the challenge and the prize " the Doctor " had flung before them.

Soon after Aggrey's first arrival in 1924 he was told that many young clerks in the offices at Accra were very

desirous of continuing their education. He readily consented to open a night-school for them, and very soon had about twenty pupils. He kept this up to the end, notwithstanding his manifold duties in other directions. He would take no pay for this work.

Teaching, however, was only part of Aggrey's activity at this time.

It was decided to start Achimota School by opening the Kindergarten in February, 1926, the number of pupils being restricted to six because no dormitories would be ready and only that number could be accommodated in the available private house. The Principal was determined to build the future University College from the very foundation—hence the decision to start with young children. This was, of course, to run counter to the views of many Africans who wanted a full-blown University at once. It was freely said that parents would not send children six years of age so far from home, and certainly would refuse to pay the fees demanded. To Aggrey was assigned the duty of persuading parents as to the reasonableness of the plan and to select " the First Six." He interviewed influential people and wrote numerous letters.

In due course the Kindergarten was opened. Lawyer Brew brought two young Fantis from Cape Coast. Prempeh of Ashanti sent a grandson, the Queen-Mother of Mampong another. Nana Ofori Atta selected a grand-nephew who might eventually succeed to the Stool of Akyen Abuakwa.* The sixth was a son of the Rev. Gaddiel Acquaah. Other applications had to be refused.

" History is being made," said Aggrey.

* Let their names be recorded: Kwami Hagan, James Kwansa, Agyeman Prempeh, Attakora Mensa, Kofi Asanti, Charlie Acquaah.

Aggrey was plunged into other controversies at this period. Reverberations of the long educational conflict between the Armstrong-Jesse Jones school and the Dubois school reached the Gold Coast from America. *The Gold Coast Leader* published editorial notes setting forth Dubois's criticisms of the Phelps-Stokes Commission's Reports. The editor attacked the type of education advocated by Dr. Jesse Jones, on the ground that it was intended " to make the African fit in with the European's scheme of African exploitation and control." Dubois found in it a defence against black agitation and a desire to substitute white leadership, white teachers and white missionaries for coloured leadership, and an attempt to decry and discredit the educated black man the world over. " Of course," he wrote, " the white world wants the black world to study ' agriculture.' It is not only easier to lynch Negroes and keep them in ignorance and peonage in country districts, but it is also easier to cheat them out of a decent income."

At this time preparations were being made for the Conference on the Christian Mission in Africa, which was to be held in September, 1926, at Le Zoute in Belgium. We who planned that gathering would have welcomed the presence of Aggrey—no man in the world would have been more welcome. But it was impossible for him to be spared from the important work he was doing. Unfortunately the impression was created on the Gold Coast that Africans were to be deliberately excluded, and this seemed to fit in with the criticisms that were being levelled against the Phelps-Stokes Commission ; it was all part and parcel of the white man's determination to decide what was good for the African without consulting him. As a matter of fact, several representative Africans as well as Afro-Americans were mem-

bers of the Conference and contributed very largely to its success.

Aggrey was cut to the quick by the suspicions that were generated. He poured out his soul to his friend, Dr. Jesse Jones.

To Dr. Jesse Jones. Achimota College,
August 14th, 1926.

The enclosed pages from our leading local paper I send you for perusal. I wish I could see you soon. Trust me, Dr. Jones, I will tell my people your heart and what you mean.

Confidentially, for your sake, the sake of the Fund, Great Britain's sake, and my own devoted country's sake, I had hoped that I had been invited to the Belgium Conference. Those people I don't think realise the New Africa. I am working hard to keep my people from raising a storm because some native African is not asked to be present. I trust next time this omission will not be made. I would have said this long ago, but I feared I might be misunderstood. . . .

God bless you, Dr. Jones. You know I am with you. I know your heart. I know what the Fund stands for. And I have already started a propaganda to clarify the air. Dubois seems determined. But I am African of Africans, and I know my people. There is a tremendously hard work ahead of me, but, to quote General Armstrong, " What are Christians in the world for but to do the impossible ? "

August 28th, 1926.

I would certainly like to see you this morning and have a long free and frank talk with you. First of all, I want to assure you that I am counteracting the wrong impression being made upon my people by the articles written and commented upon by Dr. Dubois and the local editor. I brought here—I am writing this from Cape Coast—the only copies I have of both Reports and told the local editor what is expressed therein. Above these I have told him, and others whom I have met, your *heart*, and I can assure you they see things differently . . . the clouds of misunderstanding are being not only rapidly, but to a great degree successfully cleared. . . .

There is a definite renaissance going on in Africa. A new Africa is being born. Missionary bodies do not seem to

appreciate this fact fully, but it is true nevertheless. I have talked with leading Natives all over. Humbly and reverently, Dr. Jones, I say this, but [it is] positively true, that wise Governments and Mission bodies are those who will be willing to guide this spirit and not try to stop or curb it. Africa is ready for co-operation. They want people to work *with* them—my people do, not simply to work *for*. You know, Dr. Jones, that I know my people. I have received a number of letters asking why no native African representative is to be in Belgium. It has taken much tact to keep strong comments out of the papers. There is even a suspicion that Mission Boards are getting in league with Governments to keep Africans forever as hewers of wood and drawers of water. There is even a strong suspicion against Achimota. It happens that most of the local editors are either friends of mine or old students who knew me before I left for America and who trust me. In Sir Gordon I have an excellent name to conjure with. My intimate knowledge of you, Mr. Oldham and Dr. Loram has been quite a valuable asset for helpful efforts to understand. . . . This is a critical time in the history of Africa. . . . Just as the invention of gunpowder and the mariner's compass changed political supremacies, so the World War and one or two other things are changing Africa. Africa is really the huge question mark among the continents. Occident or Orient? Conflict or concord? Africa has a special message—I wonder if [the] civilised world is willing to hear her message first-hand from her own sons and daughters. . . .

I have much more that I might inform you, but I will reserve for future letters. I trust the Belgium Conference will prove a success and I sincerely hope the time will not be far distant when, in matters that effect Africa, her sons and daughters will be represented in person. Personally I understand fully. Only as my work is so trying I had wished not to have to use part of my energies in continually explaining the intention or intentions of movements.

Rest assured, all you my friends, Aggrey will never retreat. In prayer and supplication he was given the Flag of co-operation and goodwill. He may be shot to pieces by both friend and unfriend; he may lose a limb or two, and blood may trace every step of his progress, but with God's help he is determined so to cherish his trust that he may be

able on his dying bed to shout back to the boys in words already memorable: "*The Old Flag never touched the ground!*"

Concurrently with these controversies there was one of cardinal importance for the future of the Gold Coast.

It is the policy of the British Government to rule the country as far as possible through the tribal organisations and not to allow these to be undermined and overthrown by the destructive influences caused by the spread of alien civilisation. Subversive factors were at work and the powers and prestige of the Chiefs and their Councils were threatened with decay. Government was aware of this and was anxious to strengthen and support them. One great difficulty has always been that the Gold Coast is divided up into so many small states. As we saw in Chapter II, an early attempt on the part of the Chiefs to form a Federal Government was defeated largely by the action of the Governor who was then in office. Now the Government, judging that the moment was ripe, took a step towards unification. A new Constitution was conferred in April, 1925. This provided for the appointment of fifteen official and fourteen unofficial members of the Legislative Council, instead of the eleven and nine respectively who had sat on the Council hitherto. Of the unofficial members nine were to be Africans—three to be elected by the towns, Accra, Cape Coast and Sekondi, and the other six to be Head Chiefs selected by the three Provincial Councils. These Councils were the outstanding feature of the new constitution. The informal meetings of the Chiefs for consultation which had been held on occasion in past years were now to be transformed into an integral element of the Government of the country, giving the Head Chiefs and their Councillors (some of whom were to accompany each chief to counsel and to watch) the opportunity of uniting for the preservation of their national institutions, of consulting together, of examining and advising Government on any proposed legislation affecting the people. The Chiefs were real representatives of their people, in whom, accord-

ing to the ancient democratic conception of the tribes, sovereignty resided. The Councils were intended to be the chief means by which the nationality of the Gold Coast Africans was to be built up out of the many scattered tribes.

The new constitution was fiercely attacked by educated men who were not chiefs, partly on the ground that they were to be unequally represented on the Legislative Council, partly because they thought that undue power would be placed in the hands of the Chiefs. The Government was out, they said, to make catspaws of the Chiefs, leading them to pass iniquitous laws and subsequently rob the people of their land. Beneath this opposition lay inveterate distrust of the European. " On the whole," said one paper, " we are of the opinion that our contact with the white man, like Dead Sea apples, has turned to bitter ashes in our mouth."

Aggrey was touched in a vital spot by the acrid dispute. His great principle of Co-operation was at stake. To see Chiefs and Intelligentsia at loggerheads and a threatened breach between White and Black hurt him intensely. He revealed some of his concern in the following letter.

To Dr. Jesse Jones. Achimota College,
April 24th, 1926.

The new Order in Council concerning the new Legislative Council has stirred up a hornet's nest. Part of the people of the Eastern Province, especially the educated, are against it. . . . The Paramount Chiefs of the Eastern Province, Krobo, Akuapim, Asiamankesi, Akim Abuakwa, including Nana Ofori Atta and Konor Mate Kole, are heartily for it. In the Central Province the chiefs seem to be with the so-called Intelligentsia in opposing it. Cape Coast is in the Central Province. And the Western Province seems to be opposed to it. The political atmosphere is charged. Wish I had known about the whole thing before it was promulgated. I might have saved some of the ill-feeling. Mrs. Aggrey and I spent the week-end with the Governor on invitation some time ago. I tried to point out some of the parts of the Order

that seemed to conflict with our native constitution. Sir Gordon is the best British Governor that has been sent here lately. He is a real Empire builder and lover, genuine lover, of my people. I am not sure that all his advisers are so genuine. I am not so sure. Some seem to dislike the educated class. When Hon. Ormsby Gore, Hon. [C.A.U.] Rhys [M.P.], Mr. [A.] Bevir and another representative [Mr. J. E. W. Flood] were here, His Excellency arranged for me to see them. We talked together for an hour. I let him into the back room of our mind. He was very sympathetic. Next day he spoke in public covering lines I had talked with him, and [he] made quite a hit. One of the main fears is that we are not sure the next Governor will be like Sir Gordon. Hon. Ormsby Gore spoke frankly that they would see to a continuity of policy. He intimated that the Gold Coast was the banner colony. Another evening I was invited to the Castle to discuss at more length these problems. I stated the case for my people, giving reasons for all the stir. Sir Gordon tried to stop me from paying him the people's tribute and confidence in him personally, but I could not explain other things without giving that fact its due significance. We have heard that his term that expired last year was lengthened only eighteen months and that positively at the end of that he would be removed. This with the new seemingly unequal elective representation has been the psychological cause of many a stir. I am kept very, very busy. I teach eight hours a week, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, then interview and am interviewed by Chiefs, educated and all. Some of the towns in Central Province have informed their Paramount Chiefs that if they attend the Provincial Council to be formed in May those chiefs will be destooled. Some heard that the Government would like me to attend the Central Provincial Council. The Paramount Chiefs must take their Kyiames or (misnamed) Linguists and other representatives. Being Kyiame of Anamabu, also of Nkusukum and Abura, I have right there besides what influence I have. Well, I have been informed by some of the Omans that it would not do for *me* to attend the Council, because they state they have sent petitions to the King and that after the King had reviewed the matter he might be moved to modify the Order in Council. At present they say I am the one person that can bring the old and the

young together, as well as the Chiefs and the Intelligentsia. All sides have faith and trust in me, and in turn [I may] be instrumental in getting the country and the Government to see eye to eye. If I go now, it might be misinterpreted that Government was using my power and influence to coerce the people and then there would be none to effect co-operation. Their argument is sound. I did not know that I had such confidence placed in me. At the second meeting with Hon. Ormsby Gore and his colleagues, the Governor and one or two others, we had a lengthy discussion. We were at it from 7.45 through dinner and after. His Excellency left us at midnight. Hon. Ormsby Gore and I parted at nearly 1 a.m. . . . I may some day arrange to get my salary outside of Government in order to do larger service in the interest of Co-operation. . . . Love to all. Pray for me, pray for me, yes, pray for me.

The Hon. Ormsby Gore, who was Parliamentary Under-secretary of State for the Colonies, and the other gentlemen mentioned in this letter visited the Gold Coast in March, 1926. Mr. Ormsby Gore was impressed by the abilities and character of Aggrey.

This letter proves, I think, that Aggrey was not, as his detractors alleged, a subservient tool of the British Government. On one occasion he reminded Sir Gordon Guggisberg of the stand he had taken as a youth against the Public Lands Bill in 1897. "I should act in the same way again," he said, "if I was convinced that the interests of my people were in jeopardy." "You would lose your job, Aggrey," said Sir Gordon. "Yes, sir, I know; but it will never happen while you are here."

In May, 1926, Principal Fraser and Aggrey, with two of their colleagues, Blumer and Dunstan, went for a ten days' tour along the coast, visiting Cape Coast, Sekondi and Axim, in all of which places they held meetings for the purpose of explaining Achimota. At Cape Coast, the intellectual centre, forty people met them in a private

house and were severely critical of the Government and of Achimota, but were turned into friends. At Sekondi, Aggrey made a fine speech and Fraser was pelted with questions. Aggrey went on ahead to Axim. On his arrival an African lad took him to the tennis court where Mr. Jones, the District Commissioner, was playing with three others. Mr. Jones was naturally annoyed to have his game interrupted, but Aggrey at once disarmed him with his charming smile and politeness. "I am a sort of John the Baptist," he said, "coming ahead to let you know that Principal Fraser is arriving to-morrow. I am very sorry to interrupt your game, but being an African I know that the moment I come into a District I must call on the District Commissioner." Mr. Jones presided at the meeting held next day. Mr. Fraser and Aggrey spoke—it was rather a tumultuous gathering. "Aggrey had everyone just like *that*," said Mr. Jones holding up his fist clenched, "and he had me too."

In September, Mr. Fraser returned after a short visit to England, bringing out some new additions to the staff, which now numbered thirty-one. The buildings had advanced so far that most of the masters could live at Achimota. The strike in England delayed the sending out of material, but it was hoped to open at least one boarding house in January. Meanwhile Aggrey was engaged in selecting the next batch of pupils.

To PRINCIPAL FRASER. Achimota,
October 20th, 1926.

Hail to the Chief!

Reporting Progress.

You said you would like for me to make sure of at least sixty applications for the Kindergarten and Lower Primary School by the end of this month—October. This was primary, all else secondary.

I am glad, sir, to report that up to date we have secured (including 24 already sent in to the office) 80 new applications besides the 6 already in attendance, making a total of 86. I expect more.

I told Miss Scott that I was sure of 100 by the end of December. I am giving still more conservative figures to outsiders. I have heard it said that some think we will not get 50, if even that number, for the opening. The wish is father to the thought. I think I know my people. And I think I know how to overcome the natural prejudice against sending infants and very young children away to school far from home. Two completed buildings will certainly be needed since one can accommodate only 60.

Sir, you need not be uneasy. You can be sure of at least 100; I will not be satisfied with less than 120 for January 25th next, knowing what I know and what I have been doing since your instructions from London while you were on furlough. I am on the job, sir.

Cheerio, Chief.

Yours Africanly.

A carefully written list of these pupils is preserved among Aggrey's papers, their full names, age, addresses, parents' names and tribe. To secure these children was a delightful though somewhat laborious task. Aggrey says that at this time he was receiving at least a hundred letters a week; and to answer these, in the abundant manner that he wrote, was, in the absence of a secretary, no small thing in itself. Strange letters they were, some of them. An anxious Queen Mother writes in regard to the complaints made by her small son that the cassava fufu served to him at Achimota is not his favourite "chop"; will Dr. Aggrey please see if "the catress could afford to give him plantain instead of cassava fufu?" A student in a mission school writes to ask what Dr. Aggrey drinks in place of tea and coffee to strengthen his nerves. "I think that one needs something to nourish the brain if one studies. So I beg you to let me know if Brain Phosphates is good. Kindly give me a list of these, too, and the sellers."

Interviews in addition to letters. People called at all hours, day and night, to discuss matters and to ventilate complaints. At one time it was a matter of the cooks at Achimota. One man was deeply offended because he

found Krus cooking his son's food; Krus, he declared, were thieves and rascals, and ought not to be there. Then there was the question of dress. To wear European clothes was the hallmark of education; an uneducated girl would be flogged if she wore them. In accordance with its policy of teaching respect for African ways, Achimota wished pupils to wear African robes on ceremonial occasions; and this, like other Africanising tendencies, was greatly resented by certain folk. Others complained of the games and the drill; they thought these to be a step towards making conscripts of the pupils. Aggrey listened patiently to all complaints. Sometimes, as he confided to his wife, he thought there was reason in them; but he never allowed anyone to suppose that he was in opposition to his colleagues; some people would have made capital out of it. He was consistently loyal to his Principal. "Leave it to me," he would say. "Have patience. All will come well."

Early in November, 1926, Aggrey went to Cape Coast to take part in the Jubilee celebrations of the Mfantsipim school. Mr. Isaac Fisher, an American Negro who was visiting the Gold Coast as a Travelling Fellow, under the Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, accompanied him on this trip. He had often, he said, seen audiences in the United States thrill to the words of a gifted speaker, but seldom had he witnessed such intensity of listening as he saw in the crowds that flocked to hear Aggrey: they seemed to think that he was appointed to accomplish their immediate salvation from all ills.

From Cape Coast Aggrey proceeded to Sierra Leone to represent Achimota at the Centenary Celebrations of Fourah Bay College. It was a delicate situation. Aggrey had many personal friends in Freetown, but some of these, and many other people, looked askance at Achimota. Fourah Bay had long occupied the pre-eminent position on the West Coast; its graduates were to be found in every Colony. It stood emphatically for the academic tradition in education. Achimota was looked upon as an upstart; its ideals were not the Fourah Bay ideals. Ag-

grey knew that he was in a position that needed all his tact. At the opening meeting he said : " My case reminds me of a girl who returned home from a party and told her father that a young man had kissed her. Her father said, ' How many times did he kiss you ? ' She looked into his face and replied : ' Father, I came to confess, not to boast.' " ["How the fellow manages to make up stories like that all the time and so appropriately I do not know." said Mr. Fraser. " It is genius."] He had come, Aggrey continued, not to boast of Achimota, but to confess the debt which the Gold Coast owed to Fourah Bay College. It stood to him as the symbol of the African's educational capacity and everywhere he went it was always his privilege to conjure her in defence of increased opportunities for the African.

After that speech every door, and every heart, was open to him. Between November 19th and December 4th he was called upon to deliver twenty-four speeches. Sir Ransford Slater, the Governor, invited him to dinner twice and to the opening session of the Legislative Council. The Gold Coastians of Freetown entertained him to dinner and presented him with an address written in Fanti. He addressed a united gathering of over 2,000 school children. On the first Sunday he preached in Bishop Crowther Memorial Church, and on the second to an overflowing congregation in St. George's Cathedral. He was the guest of the Principal of Fourah Bay, the Rev. J. H. C. Horsted, and every available moment he spent talking to the students, leaving a profound impression upon their minds. In his exposition of the Christian life of service and humility, he, to the students' delight, talked Latin and reminded them that in a Latin sentence the nominative may come last, but is always first—though the accusative may come first to sight it can never take precedence. Personality and not position is of prime importance.

The most important event of the visit was on Thursday morning, November 25th, when before the Faculty and many visitors, the élite of Sierra Leone, with the Bishop

in the chair, Aggrey read a paper on University Education with particular reference to the need of modernisation and scientific training. Aggrey rose at two o'clock—" the time the Muses visit me best "—to prepare the paper which was to be read at nine that morning. It was a brilliant success. He promised to prepare it for publication, but this, like so many other things, he never found time to do. It is a matter for regret, because the paper seems to have set forth his views on Higher Education. Only a few rough notes have come into my hands. University Education, he said, should combine the best of the East with the best of the West—the best of Africa, with the best of Europe, Asia and America. " It should encourage original thinking, encourage research, help to add to human knowledge. . . . We of West Africa have proven that we can get the classics, theology and philosophy. We are past-masters in jurisprudence and dialectics. The question is, Can we turn such knowledge more and more into service for the common weal? Can we give back with interest what we have received? I believe we can. It is for University Education to prove it. Scientific training will do it. . . . University Education should aim to give women parallel training and some day co-education. . . . To subdue the earth. . . . Train for character: that is, must be religious, nay Christian: Churchianity versus Christianity."

Aggrey returned laden with gifts—including a bookcase made of African wood, made by African students, and presented by the City—and resumed his many activities on the Gold Coast.

He had found certain prejudices against American ideas of education as conceived by General Armstrong and carried further by Dr. Jesse Jones, but more and more he was convinced that these were needed by his fellow-countrymen. In many speeches he talked about Education, sanitation and agriculture, and the intimate relation between these. Some people, who were accustomed to have these things kept in water-tight compartments, complained to the Governor that Aggrey was

not sticking to his last, but the Governor encouraged him to go on. Officers of the Agricultural Department, Europeans and Africans, invited him to talk to them about Co-operative Farmers' Associations, Farmers' Unions, Credit Union Banks, and other enterprises which he had been concerned with in America. "I was to speak and answer questions from 2 to 3; they kept me until 4.30," he wrote to Dr. Jones, "They thanked me profusely. I told them what we did, Professor Patterson and I, in Rowan county, and how we managed. It was an eye-opener. They want me to help them put some of the plans into work here in Gold Coast." The Medical Department invited him to give a public talk in Health Week. "The Municipal Hall was overcrowded," Aggrey wrote. "I talked on Health, Education and Progress. Dr. O'Dea, the Director of Medical and Sanitary Service, British born and educated, was so pleased he told the large audience frankly that 'in matters of Public Health, sanitation and education, America leads the world.' That came like a shock to the great audience of White and Black, but they cheered to the echo because they confessed they had never seen things in those lights before. So American education continues to win."

Aggrey also had a hand, with his colleague the Rev. R. Fisher, in founding a Teachers' Association for the Gold Coast. At the end of 1926 over 600 members were enrolled—Aggrey hoped for a thousand the next year.

"I am organising all the teachers of the Colony into local, district, provincial and Colonial associations," he wrote to Dr. Jesse Jones in September, 1926. "They are non-political, and non-denominational, but definitely mutually helpful, and progressive, with 'the sense of the community' imbued. Next I am going to organise Parent-teachers' Associations, then Farmers' Conferences and Fairs. You see I am trying to put *The Four Essentials* into practice."

In December, with the hearty support of Principal Fraser, Aggrey summoned an informal Conference on Education. The meetings, which were held at Achimota,

were attended by Chiefs, lawyers, Europeans, Africans, about a hundred in all. Mr. Fraser presided and the Governor was present. Papers were read on the vernaculars, text-books, and other subjects, and these were followed by long discussions. One of the local newspapers showed that it had grasped the meaning of the Conference. "It is a happy augury," wrote the editor, "that already Achimota is considered as a national institution." Achimota, in the mind of its founders, was to be a channel of new life for the people of the Gold Coast.

The great day was now approaching, perhaps the greatest day in Aggrey's life—the day of the formal opening of the Prince of Wales' College and School, Achimota.

Aggrey was now living at Achimota in a house situated next to the Principal's. The sixty pupils were ready, 24 girls and 36 boys, and there was a reserve list of 250 names. Applications had come from places as distant as Uganda and Tanganyika. There was still some doubt, however, whether the Africans of the Gold Coast would rally for the great event. "Hardly anyone will come," said the pessimists who remembered the opposition shown to the school. Printed invitations were sent out in the hope that perhaps three hundred would be accepted. "You need not do it," said Aggrey, "you will have more people than there is room for—such a gathering as the Gold Coast has never seen." He had been preparing for this. His colleagues acted in faith and put a thousand seats in the Great Hall of Achimota.

The 28th of January, 1927, dawned bright and fresh, for a heavy thunderstorm had cleared the air. Early in the morning the 120 students of the Training College (now to be part of Achimota) walked the eight miles from Accra, decorated the buildings and erected an entrance arch inscribed "Welcome our Founder." By ten o'clock visitors began to arrive; by 2 o'clock they were streaming in; by 3.30 the Hall was almost full, and an hour later 2,000 people were crowded within, while 4,000 stood outside. They had come from all parts of the country, north, south, east and west. Forty Chiefs,

AFTER THE OPENING OF ACHIMOTA BY THE GOVERNOR

Photo by J. A. C. Holm

arrayed in rich robes, were there, including Prempeh of Ashanti. At the far end were grouped the Training College students, and up in the gallery the sixty young pupils.

The Governor arrived to the tune of "God save the King" played by the Police band, and having formally opened the door with a special key took his place on the platform. The College hymn was sung for the first time and prayers were conducted by the Chaplain, the Rev. C. E. Stuart.

The Governor delivered a great speech in which he declared his firm belief that Achimota must be free from Government control and work under its own constitution. "We do not want it to be a Government College; we want it to be the people's College. If it is to be a pride to the African, it must have a free, inspired and natural life." This declaration was most heartily received, and it expressed Mr. Fraser's firm conviction too.*

Other speeches were made. At the conclusion, as the Governor left the Hall, the bells rang out for the first time from the College tower, pealing forth the Westminster chimes.

On the steps outside, the Governor paused for the photographer. "Come here, you modest man," he called. Aggrey looked round. "I mean you, Aggrey." Sir Gordon stood with his hand on Aggrey's shoulder as the picture was taken.

Next day the Achimota staff presented the Governor with a gold Keystone—in allusion to his book on education. Principal Fraser was to present it, but afterwards the staff all agreed that the privilege should fall to Aggrey, because he represented Africa, which His Excellency

* Mr. Fraser writes to me: "When I went into Aggrey's bedroom late one night and told him of the idea of a constitution for Achimota and the general lines that appeared to one likely, he leapt out of bed and strode about the room, his face shining, almost springing in excitement. He pledged his support, and said, 'If we get that through we can sing the Nunc Dimittis.' In the fight for it I have felt Aggrey alive, and have known, I believe, with him the communion of those who die not." (18.1.29.)

loved so well, and because he was mainly responsible for the great success of the opening.

It was the breaking of a new era for the Gold Coast—in Aggrey's belief, for all Africa.

Sir Gordon Guggisberg's term of office was now drawing to a close. He left in April. "For the first time in the history of the Gold Coast real tears were shed at his departure," Aggrey wrote, "and the crowd that lined the streets from Government House to the shore, and the thousands that crowded every possible space all along the beach to see him off, told him unmistakably how Africa loved him, and hated to see him leave. I feel a personal loss."

CHAPTER XVI

THE HOME-GOING

AGGREY'S friends were as anxious as himself that he should write the dissertation necessary to secure his Ph.D. at Columbia University. The subject had for a long time been maturing in his mind. "It is now going to be about British rule in West Africa," he wrote to Dr. Jesse Jones. "Those who hate Great Britain and are Anglophobists will have their eyes opened." It was known to his friends that he wished to expound his convictions on co-operation between Black and White: doing ample justice to Europeans, while not concealing their mistakes, and interpreting the mind of Africans. His birth, his experience, fitted him supremely for this task. We who knew him were confident that he had a definite contribution to make towards the study and solution of the Race Problem.

The question was, how should Aggrey write his book? It was very evident that he could never do it on the Gold Coast; he needed to be free from other duties for a season. Early in 1926 Dr. Jesse Jones urged this upon Principal Fraser, but it was not then possible to release Aggrey for an extended period. A year later the Governor consented that he should go on leave in May and return in November, when he would be needed to select the next batch of pupils to be admitted to Achimota.

May, 1927, saw him in London. During a week-end spent with his friend, Miss Gollock, the outline of the book was determined. He read it through afterwards with Sir Gordon Guggisberg, who approved of it. An introduction to the Librarian of the Royal Colonial Institute readily gave him access to a magnificent collection

of books and the use of the Imperial Attic as a study. But, alas, he could not be hid; people sought him out; and a visitor to the Attic would find him talking vehemently to members of his own race.

He wrote an account of his plans to Dr. Jesse Jones.

To Dr. Jesse Jones. London,
May 28th, 1927.

I had arranged to do part of my writing in America and the other part in England. For example, the part dealing with restlessness in Africa, based on personal experience and travel, and urging the study of history and sociology as essential to mutual understanding, outline of general scope and contents of volume, announcing specialisation on Gold Coast together with some facts and figures from Sierra Leone and possibly Nigeria; also the historical and sociological background, including migration of [the] so-called Akan peoples, [their] social and political organisation, religion, wars, etc.; summary of racial inter-relations to date; mutual misunderstandings, the rising tide of colour, Josey's book, the psychology of prejudice, and some practical suggestions—[all this] I could do in America. The other parts—such, for example, as the colonisation of Portuguese, Danes, Dutch and English; political, commercial, educational and religious development up to 1914; changes in situation of the Colony, political organisation, resources, trade, taxation, land tenure, labour, etc., education, activities of Government, all treated as illustrating relationships; direct study, with statistics, of present racial relations, part of mutual misunderstandings and where White meets Black; the advance made since 1919; 1919-1927, Sir Gordon's administration; the dawn of the Golden Age of West Africa; consulting of official documents from 1865 up to the present, table of historical events, lists of Governors, graphs of increase of African employment and co-operation, sources, etc., etc.; practical suggestions and results of Governors' conference—to be done in London. . . . Both Sit Gordon and Sir Ransford have promised to help me by making it easy for me to secure any and all material I shall need. The Native Africans are also getting facts for me, so that facts of importance will be laid bare for the illumination of both sides. I will *not* criticise any other nation, I mean

to state facts and figures, procedures, methods and policies, examine them and let those speak for themselves. I think when the world read the book they will conclude that co-operation and contact with Whites and the rule of Great Britain have not been bad things at all.

At that time I was giving a course of lectures at the Church Missionary House in Salisbury Square in London. On May 26th my subject was the religious belief and practices of the Akan peoples. I had hardly begun to speak when, to my utter surprise and, I confess, dismay, Aggrey walked in and took a seat in front of me. I had not heard of his arrival in England, and I was nervous about lecturing in his presence on the religion of his own people. However, he was very kind about it, and at the close he addressed us, at our invitation, upon the same subject. Whatever the lecture was worth, that talk of his, stressing the points I had made and illuminating them in his own humorous and earnest manner, will live long in our memory. Had I known I was to be his biographer I should have taken full notes of his speech, but, as a matter of fact, I was so absorbed in him, that I wrote nothing. In conversation afterwards he told me he was very tired, and indeed he looked it. I never saw him again.

One day he went to be the guest of Sir Gordon Guggisberg at Yateley. " He actually gave up his own room for me," said Aggrey. Late into the night he sat with Sir Gordon and Miss Guggisberg around the fire, and with its light playing upon their faces they talked about Africa. Miss Guggisberg had not before come into close contact with Africans, and she was fascinated by Aggrey's lovely smile and earnest manner as he talked of his hopes for his own people. He was happy and quiet that evening —unusually quiet, Sir Gordon thought, and only realised later that he was a very tired man. " I've been working hard," Aggrey said to him; " some day you will know how hard."

From Sir Gordon Guggisberg Yateley.
June 26th, 1927.

My dear Aggrey,

I am sorry that I missed sending you a cheering telegram on your departure. However, I am so much the richer, and so are you probably! I do hope that you will have a really successful and happy time in the States.

You have great work ahead of you. It is on you that your country will greatly depend in the next fifteen years during which Achimota will be coming into her own. Then—and not till then—you can fold your arms and say, "I've done my best, it is for my children, Abna, Kwegyir, Rosebud, even Orison, to carry on." Two generations of Aggrey should save the Gold Coast many an awkward fall.

I will look forward to seeing you on your return.

In June Aggrey sailed to America in s.s. *Mauretania*. Among his fellow passengers was the Bishop of Washington, who observed his modest habits on the ship and introduced himself to him. Afterwards he wrote to Dr. Anson Phelps Stokes: "I came to know something of the real worth of the man. In the first place, he impressed me as being highly consecrated to the important service to which he had committed himself. I was struck with the refinement of his bearing and speech and for my own personal profit sought him out whenever opportunity afforded. . . . It seemed to me that coupled with his rare consecration was the genius of statesmanship. He had a clear vision of the possibilities of the work in which he was engaged. I have rarely, if ever, met a man of his race who left upon me a more enduring impression."

Landing in New York on June 16th, Aggrey proceeded at once to his home at Salisbury. The home-coming was a joyous one. With what eagerness he had looked forward to seeing the baby Orison, so named by Mrs. Aggrey because of God's wonderful manifestation to her through prayer. He was exceedingly proud of the child.

He brought with him a bottle of water from the sacred spring, Kakawa, to be used at the baptismal service. In his own infancy his head had been dipped into that spring, and he wanted the same waters to bathe his son's head as a dedication to the work it was hoped he would live to do in Africa. Unfortunately Aggrey could not be present at the ceremony.

During the two weeks that Aggrey was at home he tried to settle down to his book, but the natural excitement attending his home-coming, and the constant calling of friends, made it impossible. Each Sunday he went off preaching in response to earnest solicitations. He had no time even to attend to necessary business arrangements. For the sake of the child, Mrs. Aggrey wished him to take out another insurance policy—an early one had matured some years before and the money, a thousand dollars, had been drawn. Aggrey saw no need of another policy. " My father lived to be nearly ninety, my mother is over eighty. I am going to live to be a hundred," he declared with a laugh. " I have never drunk alcohol, have never injured my system, the work I am called to do needs long years. I'm going to live." Mrs. Aggrey noticed that he was fatigued, but this was nothing unusual, and she had no premonitions.

A telegram came from Miss Carney, of the Teachers' College, inviting Aggrey to speak at a meeting at Columbia University; and a second came from Dr. James Mason, Financial Secretary of the Zion Methodist Church, pressing him to preside at a gathering in New York in the interest of Livingstone College. He was reluctant to leave home again so soon, but could not refuse an opportunity of speaking on Africa and for his beloved College. He planned to stay two weeks in New York, working at intervals on his book, and then return to Salisbury.

The meeting on behalf of Livingstone College was held in Mother Zion Church, New York, on Sunday evening, July 17th. Notwithstanding the extreme heat, nearly two thousand people were present. The famous Livingstone

College quartette sang some of those spirituals which go to the heart. Aggrey appeared hearty and vigorous and spoke for an hour of what Livingstone College—" my guiding star and inspiration for many years "—had meant to him and to his race. He concluded with an eloquent plea for Higher Education and generous maintenance of the College.

At Columbia on July 21st Aggrey addressed an audience of teachers, many of whom were Americans from the south, assembled for the summer course. He pleaded for a wider view of African problems and for a kinder attitude of Black to White, of White to Black. He was at his best that day, humorous, earnest, brilliant, and his appeal went home. " Maybe," he said to his white listeners, " I shall be standing by St. Peter when you come to the pearly gates and I shall say a good word for you."

In the intervals of seeing friends and addressing meetings, Aggrey worked in the library of Columbia University. On July 19th he wrote his daughter Abna : " The big library here is quiet and comfortable and my brain is getting oiled. The wheel of thought has already begun to roll. I hope to write at least 20,000 words before I get back to Salisbury."

Let us say here that this book, from which so much was hoped and which was expected to secure for him the coveted Ph.D., was not completed. A mass of notes, and about twenty quarto pages pencilled on board the *Mauretania*, are all that remain—nothing that could be published after his death.

He begins with a quotation from Lady Lugard's *A Tropical Dependency* : " . . . it may happen that we shall have to revise entirely our view of the black races, and regard those who now exist as the decadent representatives of an almost forgotten era, rather than as the embryonic possibility of an era yet to come."* He sees in this

* It has been pointed out to me that in arguing that Fantis, etc., were descended from the civilisation-making Blacks, Aggrey quoted this passage from Lady Lugard as if it supported him, whereas it really contradicts his thesis.

" a door of hope " to the people of West Africa, and intends to show that the present West African is a direct descendant from the people who taught Egypt her hieroglyphs and worship—" the Jethros at whose feet sat many a Moses whose codes of law were got from the Ethiopians directly." He writes of Meroe, the ancient city that in antiquity was regarded as " the cradle of arts and sciences " ; quotes Sayce to the effect that black troops from Ethiopia routed Sennacherib and thus saved Judaism to the Jews. " One wonders," Aggrey comments, " if this meek race may not some day save Christianity to the Christians." Then he notes what Lady Lugard says : " There seems to be no other conclusion to be drawn than that at that remote period of history the leading race of the western world was a black race." " I hope to prove," says Aggrey, " that a number of the Negroes, pure Negroes, who inhabit say the Gold Coast, are a conquering race who trace their lineage to Songhay, to Melle, to Ghana, to Egypt, to Meroe of the Ethiopians." He goes on to describe five of the old civilisations of Africa—of Kilwa on the Indian Ocean which traded with China—of the Nile Valley. . . . " Homer, the blind bard of Chios, relates the story that once it was necessary for a Greek to invoke the assistance of Olympian Zeus, but the priest told this faithful worshipper that the gods were away as it was their annual wont—they were gone away beyond the River Ocean for twelve days, delighting themselves among the blameless Ethiopians."

And there the manuscript breaks off. This was, of course, part of his introduction ; he was anxious to prove that the African had been capable of achieving great things in the past, and was still capable of achieving them. If only he had written what was in his mind—put himself into a book ! According to notes scattered over his correspondence, he, at one time or another, thought of writing many books. There was to be one " on what I call the Bible through the mind of an African, or Seeing

God or Jesus through the African's eyes." But not one was ever written.

The intended fortnight in New York lengthened into three weeks, and the family at Salisbury vainly looked for his return. Then, with shattering suddenness, at five o'clock on Saturday afternoon, July 30th, came a telegram to say that he was ill, and soon afterwards another to announce his death.

In New York Aggrey occupied a room in St. Nicholas Avenue, Harlem. His friends, the Rev. M. Norman and Mrs. Wilson * lived there, and Aggrey had written them from England asking them for their hospitality during his sojourn in that city. As they could not accommodate him, they arranged for him to have a bedroom in the higher storey, in an apartment occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Rabain. It is a fine building, with splendid exterior, a marble staircase, electric light and lift, somewhat dilapidated as to the mural decorations—evidently a building that until recently was inhabited by a wealthy class of Whites. Aggrey was absent during the day, but he spent many of the evenings with the Wilsons. On the last Sunday, as he left the house for his preaching appointment, he appeared so bright that Mrs. Wilson said, " You look so spry that the girls will be taking you from your wife." " No fear of that," said he cheerily.

He visited them more than once that week. On the Friday evening Mrs. Wilson noticed that he fell asleep several times, was very quiet, and seemed utterly fatigued. She induced him to go to bed. Mr. Wilson persuaded him to give up the engagement he had made to preach in Mother Zion church on the following Sunday.

At five o'clock next morning, July 30th, Mr. Rabain telephoned from the apartment above to say that Aggrey

*Mr. Wilson is a native of Sierra Leone, a son of Archdeacon Wilson.

was ill. Mr. Wilson went up to the small, but cosy room where he lay; saw that he was certainly ill and at once telephoned to Dr. A. A. Holdbrooks, a former pupil and for twenty-seven years a friend of Aggrey. Dr. Holdbrooks rushed to him as fast as his car would go and reached him about seven. Aggrey complained of pains in the abdomen, his temperature was 100, his pulse 80. After measures had been taken to relieve him, he suffered with frontal headache, which grew in intensity. Cold towels and ice were applied to his head and morphine was administered. The doctor left at 10 a.m. to visit other patients, giving Aggrey into Mrs. Rabain's charge. He then seemed a little better. On his return, Dr. Holdbrooks found Aggrey lying in a profound stupor, with signs of cerebral irritation. He called in Dr. I. D. Hoage. Mr. Wilson, not realising that Aggrey was seriously ill, had gone early to visit another African invalid at Brooklyn. Mrs. Wilson went up and found Dr. Hoage there in the room. Mr. Roy, of the Phelps-Stokes Fund, who had not seen his friend Aggrey for some days, rang up in the course of the morning to inquire for him, and was told that he was ill and that the doctor said he must not be disturbed. When later in the day, they tried to telephone to Mr. Roy, the office was shut and nobody knew the private addresses of Aggrey's white friends. So it came to pass that none of these saw him that day.

Between six and seven in the evening the physicians decided to send Aggrey to Harlem hospital, which was not more than fifteen minutes away. Chief Amoah, of the Gold Coast, came in soon after the ambulance had departed, and went on to the hospital, but by the time he reached there Aggrey's spirit had winged its flight. He had arrived at the hospital in a state of coma. Measures were taken to revive him, but twenty minutes after admission the end came. An autopsy revealed that death was due to pneumococcus meningitis.*

* A correspondent contributed to a Gold Coast paper of August 27th an entirely fictitious account of Aggrey's closing hours. It was said that his family was with him, that he prayed for Africa—" he is

The news was flashed abroad, bringing dismay and sorrow to Aggrey's friends all over the world.

It happened that I was at Eastbourne for that week-end, speaking at the Church Missionary Society's Summer School. To my delight I found Mr. A. G. Fraser there, and we had a long talk about Achimota and Aggrey, neither of us dreaming that our friend was dead. Monday was Bank Holiday, and no papers were published. On Tuesday morning I set off by train to Hastings and from there to walk along the coast to Dover. On the way I picked up a newspaper and read the brief announcement. Dr. Aggrey dead! As I walked along, the contrast between the smiling summertide and the rebellious grief in my soul smote me hard. To die—to be taken from his work now, when he had furbished his tools and was beginning to forge those links between White and Black! We shall vehemently desire him in the day of battle, I thought. It was impossible to think of that bright spirit as quenched. His laughter mingled with the singing of the birds, and I knew he was alive.

The day before this—August 1st—many friends, white and black, gathered for the funeral service in Mother Zion Church, New York. Columbia University was represented by Professor Shenton and Miss Carney; Africa by Chief Amoah, in native dress, and Mr. Max Yergan. The address was delivered by Dr. Anson Phelps Stokes, Canon of Washington Cathedral and President of the Phelps-Stokes Fund. He dwelt upon Aggrey's intellectual, moral and spiritual qualities, his humility, his courage, his unselfishness. "In my long acquaintance with Dr. Aggrey," he said, "I have never heard him say an impure thing, nor have known him to act from anything except the purest motives. His was a clean life and an unsullied purpose. . . . I believe that the service he has rendered to the Dark Continent in removing scales

reported to have oft repeated, 'I pray for my people and dear Africa, may they continue to work for the greatness that awaits them in the future'—and that he was heard to sing, 'Pleasant are Thy courts above'."

from the eyes of the Native and in bringing about better understanding between African and European can be compared with what Booker Washington did in a similar way in the United States."

Aggrey's body was conveyed to Salisbury for interment. Two thousand people, white and black, attended the service in the College auditorium. Bishop W. J. Walls conducted, and tributes were paid by Dr. W. H. Goler, ex-President of the College, Professor Brawley of Shaw University, Dr. Jesse Jones, Bishop W. W. Jones, Dr. George E. Davis, of the State Department of Public Instruction, and Dr. S. G. Atkins, President of Teachers' College, Winston-Salem. Dr. Jesse Jones, who of all men, perhaps, knew and understood Aggrey best, spoke with an emotion that was infectious of the friend whom he loved as a brother. The honorary pall-bearers were all white citizens of Salisbury : Mr. E. C. Gregory, ex-Mayor A. L. Smoot, Mr. J. M. McCorkle, Mr. A. Buerbaum, Mr. W. H. Leonard, and Mr. J. C. Kesler. Many other citizens, ladies and gentlemen, sent wreaths.

The news of Aggrey's death reached the Gold Coast early on Sunday—how it came is not clear, probably some African cabled it from America. It flashed quickly through the country ; perhaps the drums sounded it abroad ; and everywhere the people received it with consternation and incredulity, more so, says one of my informants, than even if King George were dead. Official confirmation did not arrive till two days later.

On August 3rd an Extraordinary Gazette was issued by command of the Governor, Sir Ransford Slater.

> His Excellency the Governor announces with profound regret the death at New York, on the 30th July, of Dr. J. E. K. Aggrey, M.A., D.D., Ph.D., Assistant Vice-Principal of Prince of Wales' College, Achimota.
>
> During the three years of his service under the Gold Coast Government Dr. Aggrey did work of enduring value for the people of his native country. Not only did he take the utmost pains to explain to his countrymen Government's educational policy, especially as exemplified at Achimota,

but he never failed to promote with striking ability and eloquence, both in the Gold Coast and elsewhere, that harmonious co-operation between the African and European races which is so essential to progress. The death at the very beginning of a new administration of one whom the late Governor rightly described as a Patriot and an Enthusiast is a severe blow to both Government and people, and His Excellency appeals to all those who shared Dr. Aggrey's hopes for the future of his race not to forget his high ideals and wise counsels.

By His Excellency's Command,
G. C. DU BOULAY,
Acting Colonial Secretary.

A Service of Remembrance and Thanksgiving was held at Achimota on Sunday, August 7th. About 800 people gathered in the Great Hall, including the Governor, Lady Slater, Miss Slater, the Colonial Secretary and other officials, Sir Ofori Atta, the Omanhene of Anamabu and many other African notables. The Governor read the Lessons and the Acting-Principal, the Rev. C. Kingsley Williams, delivered a magnificent address based on our Lord's words (Mark xii, 27), " God is not the God of the dead but of the living."

" We have been his pupils," said Mr. Williams, " we have learnt from his flashing smile and almost superhuman energy of speech and action ; and we know we shall never again learn from a teacher of such infectious enthusiasm, such splendid vivacity. Or we have been his colleagues, proud of his friendship, relying on his loyalty, relying never in vain, inspired by his counsel ; and we know that there is no one who can so help us understand our task, so forgive and repair and explain our blunders and our follies. Or we have been fellow-servants with him of this Colony and its peoples, and we know, as we have been reminded, what a patriot, what an enthusiast, has been taken from us. What the loss of him will mean for Achimota is a thing we dare not think of yet. ' Irreparable,' ' irreplaceable,' are the words on everybody's lips ; and to all human seeming no other words suffice. . . . Thank God for the passionate purity of his life . . . for his passionate energy. His house was next to mine. I know the life he lived. Up early, read-

ing and writing through half the night, eating at the longest intervals, eating almost nothing even then, always working, never resting, constantly interrupted, he filled his crowded days with labour. And four times a month he would be away on long journeys to distant places, where two or three days would be spent with every moment between exhausting speeches given to listening to more exhausting talk.

" One other master passion dominated his life : a passion for friendliness, for fellowship, for co-operation. He knew the love of love, the hate of hate, the scorn of scorn. He never despaired. And for despair he had more reason than any white man can ever understand, or any African who has never left West Africa. He suffered because he was an African, he had seen others suffer because they were Africans.

" I myself once heard him tell a crowd of many hundred British students how once he crossed a continent twice within three days, to be present at a conference with two white friends ; and on both journeys had to sit up all night in the ' Jim-crow ' car (as they infelicitously call it) because he was an African ; how . . . I myself saw those hundreds of men and women, a crowd as great as that which fills this hall to-day, begin to burn with rage and shame, the easy rage and shame of the untempted, perhaps—and then

" ' Happy as a lover and attired
In sudden brightness like a man inspired,'

he had us laughing with him at the folly of it all, lifting race and colour out of tragedy into comedy, and proving that by laughter and the grace of God the greatest menace to our modern world may yet become our greatest triumph."

On the same day another memorial service was held at Holy Trinity Church, Accra. The Rev. C. E. Stuart, chaplain of Achimota, was the preacher. " I know," he said, " that I am speaking for the whole staff when I say that we are feeling like a ship that has lost her pilot."

Other services were held that day, and later. At the Wesleyan Church, Cape Coast, the Rev. H. Webster spoke to people who had known Aggrey since his childhood. " Yesterday," said he, " I had one of the proudest moments of my life. I stood in the presence of Dr. Aggrey's mother, and on behalf of my own race and

yours, I thanked her for the child she had given us and for his influence upon his generation." On September 4th a great congregation filled the Wesleyan Church in Tinubu Square, Lagos. The Nigerian Government was represented ; Bishop Melville Jones was present ; a Fanti dirge, " Wor sur Tio," was rendered by the Fanti choir, and the Rev. Oliver Griffin gave an eloquent address. London, too, had its service. It was held in St. Martin's-in-the-Fields ; the Archbishop of Canterbury was represented ; many African students were there ; and the Rev. Dr. M. J. Elliott, a former missionary in West Africa, spoke on the text : " Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel." An African funeral dirge was rendered by Ladipo Solanke, the hon. secretary of the West African Students' Union. The final verse ran thus :

K'Olorun ghe safefe rere
K'Oba Ko sehin re ni rere
K'o d'Asalu Orun
K'o wo Paradise
O digbose.

" May the Owner of Heaven give him perfect peace !
May his labours immortalise his name !
May he gain heavenly victory !
We wish him Godspeed."

At a meeting of the Legislative Council of the Gold Coast on September 5th, the Director of Education, the Hon. D. J. Oman, moved that " This Council do place on record its sense of the great loss to the cause of education, social service and moral progress which the Gold Coast has sustained in the death of Dr. J. E. K. Aggrey." The motion was seconded by the Hon. Casely Hayford and spoken to by Sir Ofori Atta and other African members. " We feel we cannot fill his place," declared Sir Ofori. In putting the motion, Sir Ransford Slater, the Governor, recalled a conversation which he had had with his predecessor before taking over the reins of administration. "As regards Dr. Aggrey he used these words, ' You can trust him absolutely,' and I think that would be

a very fine epitaph to put on Dr. Aggrey's grave. . . . I would ask Honourable Members to pass this motion by standing in silence."

The Council approved of a pension of £60 a year to be paid from the Colony's treasury to Dr. Aggrey's mother.

Tributes to Aggrey's character and influence have been penned by many who knew him well. Mr. J. H. Oldham, secretary of the International Missionary Council, wrote: "I shall always be thankful that it was my privilege to know him. He taught me many lessons. He was one of the most Christlike men I have known and he was perhaps the greatest interpreter of men to one another that I have ever met."

Of other tributes we can only quote two. The first is from the pen of the Rev. A. G. Fraser, the Principal of Achimota:

> I knew Aggrey better than most men probably. For in the first year of our work in the Gold Coast the staff were all located in one house, and some of us had to sleep two in a room. Aggrey and myself shared a room for a considerable time. He was a delightful man to live with, full of humour, never taking offence, always looking on the bright side of things. He was devoted to his people and country and was unsparing of himself. He was equally ready to spend his time and labour over the poorest as over the most powerful, and was as accessible to them. Men sometimes said he was conceited. He had his conceit, but it was never offensive, it was never at the expense of others. There was no egotism in Aggrey. When he enjoyed himself he brought all others into his enjoyment. He shared himself. . . . He was one of the purest men I have ever met. And he was a great human being. He was a friend to men and interested in all of them, and always kindly.
>
> He it was who persuaded me to go out to Achimota. But for him I would not have gone, for he knew the people and could help me to know them, and no one else could have

done that. So I made his coming with me one of my conditions for acceptance of that work. He promised to come and help. He did so at what was at first a pecuniary sacrifice. Never had a man a more loyal fellow-worker, and he was invaluable in the special work he had to do. I have had many good things in life, but one of the best is being allowed to know Aggrey intimately and well.

And this was written by Sir Gordon Guggisberg :

In the passing-over of Aggrey, Africa has lost one of her greatest sons. Many there are, both White and Black, who will mourn personally for a loyal friend ; but those who knew the ideals of the man, and his practical way of carrying them out, will realise—as the vast majority may not—what a blow has been dealt to the progress of the African races.

For the essence of Aggrey was that he was an African, imbued with the ancient customs and traditions of his people, his knowledge of the way in which they thought, undisturbed by his Western education or his long sojourn and brilliant scholastic career in the United States of America. But his deep affection for his people and their customs never blinded him for a moment to the fact which he so clearly saw, that changes must come, conditions and manner of life and thought must alter, if his beloved Africans were to keep pace with modern civilisation, to keep their place in a continually advancing world.

At the same time, equally and very keenly, he felt that any changes that came to his people must not alter their personality, their spirit, their character as *Africans*. That was his constant anxiety—how to give them the opportunities for acquiring all the learning, all the knowledge of arts and crafts, all the mental poise and character, that centuries of slow progress have given to the civilised nations of the world, and yet how to ensure that they retained the spirit of their ancestors and remained African.

That was a gigantic task for any man to set himself. But he had two incalculably valuable assets—faith in God and faith in his people—and though his fertile imagination conceived many ideals, his learning, strong character and varied experience supplied him with practical ideas for carrying them out.

His task was in his mind night and day. No trouble was too great for him, no help that he could give was ever refused.

Constant travelling, constant public speaking, long and interminable arguments with those whom he believed to be on the wrong path, long letters to those whom he could not reach, hours of teaching the young Africans in the schools, such were Aggrey's days in the Gold Coast. Only a real faith that lifted him above himself could have sustained him through the last three years ; and he had that faith—the real faith of a real Christian.

In one way Aggrey was so particularly valuable to the world that he is, at present, irreplaceable : he was a magnificent link between Black and White. He himself realised to the full that the progress of his people depended chiefly on close co-operation between Black and White. It was to the better understanding by the one of the other that he devoted himself.

Aggrey, indeed, was the finest interpreter which the present century has produced of the white man to the black, of the black man to the white. To neither in his private conversation was he sparing in his criticism of their failings ; but it was kindly criticism, for, as he once said, they were not their personal failings but failings inherent in the system which has hitherto dominated the relations of black and white. It was to better those relations by creating a wiser mutual understanding that he set himself : the small things, in his eyes, were lost to sight in the big aim.

I have written of my friend Aggrey as I found the man—found him in many long and very personal talks with him—found him in his work. Of all the men I know, Aggrey was most prepared to cross the great river : he would not grieve except for leaving his wife and children—and his task unfinished. There are others to come. May his example stimulate them. May we have more Aggreys in our great continent of Africa.

And so, old friend, rest in peace ! You have laid the foundations for the road along which your beloved Africans are marching.

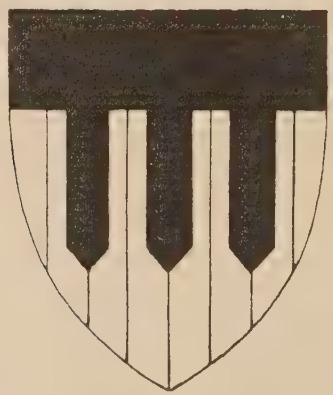
An Aggrey Students' Society was formed in April, 1928, by men of the Training College. The president, H. Ampomah, dedicated it on the first anniversary of Aggrey's death. " Yes ; that Aggrey is dead is true in a sense," he said, " but then he will be dead if we wish him so." The Society was formed to remind students of the

great responsibility that was theirs and to spread Aggrey's message—in other words, to keep Aggrey alive. And not only to keep our Aggrey alive, said the president, " but also to try and become Aggreys ourselves, for after all (recalling Aggrey's famous parable) we are not fowls, we are eagles, and we can fly as high, if not higher, provided that we are willing to pay the price. Can't we fly as high ? Well, we can. Then—Let's go ! Eagles ! "

A motto which every African school might well take for itself : "Let's go ! Eagles ! "

These are all true and noble tributes, but to my mind the noblest has yet, in conclusion, to be told.

One day Principal Fraser was struck by the way in which African speakers at a meeting referred to Aggrey's word picture of the white and black keys of the piano. The highest human harmony—such is the meaning of it —is unthinkable without the co-operation of Black and White, whom God has made to work together. Mr. Fraser asked two artistic members of his staff, Messrs. Brown and Scragg, to design a shield for Achimota which would embody this idea. They produced the design that figures so frequently in these pages. It represents what was dearest to the heart of James Emman Kwegyir Aggrey.



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